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MEMOIR

ON SLAVERY,

READ BEFORE THE

SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING,

OF SOUTH CAROLINA,

AT ITS ANNUAL MEETING AT COLUMBIA.

1837.

BY CHANCELLOR HARPER.

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ERRATA.

Page 6, 23d line from bottom for "equality" read *inequality.*
Page 6, 20th line from bottom, for "make" read *mark.*
Page 6, 9th " " for "would" read *could.*
Page 16, 16th " from top, for "labour" read *labourer.*
Page 17, 12th " from top, for "animate" read *alleviate.*
Page 26, 5th " from bottom, for "our" read *one.*
Page 43, 11th " from top, for "rich" read *weak.*
Page 45, 20th " from bottom, for "there" read *then.*
Page 49, 16th " from bottom, for "severe" read *more.*
Page 49, 14th " from bottom, for "necessary" read *unnecessary.*
Page 49, 17th " from top, for "horrid flame" read *lurid flame.*
Page 53, 20th " from top, for "Meotic Sea," read *Sea of Moeris.*
Page 58, 26th " from bottom, for "prevalent" read *prurient.*
Page 59, 15th " from bottom, for "undoing" read *undergoing.*
Page 60, 22d " from bottom, for "fierce" read *pure.*
Page 60, 22d " from bottom, for "defeated" read *defecated.*
Page 61, 5th " from bottom, for "uproot" read *uproar.*

MEMOIR.

The institution of domestic slavery exists over far the greater portion of the inhabited earth. Until within a very few centuries, it may be said to have existed over the whole earth—at least in all those portions of it which had made any advances towards civilization. We might safely conclude then that it is deeply founded in the nature of man and the exigencies of human society. Yet, in the few countries in which it has been abolished—claiming, perhaps justly, to be farthest advanced in civilization and intelligence, but which have had the smallest opportunity of observing its true character and effects—it is denounced as the most intolerable of social and political evils. Its existence, and every hour of its continuance, is regarded as the crime of the communities in which it is found. Even by those in the countries alluded to, who regard it with the most indulgence or the least abhorrence—who attribute no criminality to the present generation—who found it in existence, and have not yet been able to devise the means of abolishing it, it is pronounced a misfortune and a curse injurious and dangerous always, and which must be finally fatal to the societies which admit it. This is no longer regarded as a subject of argument and investigation. The opinions referred to are assumed as settled, or the truth of them as self-evident. If any voice is raised among ourselves to extenuate or to vindicate, it is unheard. The judgment is made up. We can have no hearing before the tribunal of the civilized world.

Yet, on this very account, it is more important that we, the inhabitants of the slave holding States of America, insulated as we are, by this institution, and cut off, in some degree, from the communion and sympathies of the world by which we are surrounded, or with which we have intercourse, and exposed continually to their animadversions and attacks, should thoroughly understand this subject and our strength and weakness in relation to it. If it be thus criminal, dangerous and fatal; and if it be possible to devise means of freeing ourselves from it, we ought at once to set about the employing of those means. It would be the most wretched and imbecile fatuity, to shut our eyes to the impending dangers and horrors, and "drive darkling

down the current of our fate," till we are overwhelmed in the final destruction. If we are tyrants, cruel, unjust, oppressive, let us humble ourselves and repent in the sight of Heaven, that the foul stain may be cleansed, and we enabled to stand erect as having common claims to humanity with our fellow men.

But if we are nothing of all this; if we commit no injustice or cruelty; if the maintenance of our institutions be essential to our prosperity, our character, our safety, and the safety of all that is dear to us, let us enlighten our minds and fortify our hearts to defend them.

It is a somewhat singular evidence of the indisposition of the rest o the world to hear any thing more on this subject, that perhaps the most profound, original and truly philosophical treatise, which has appeared within the time of my recollection,* seems not to have attracted the slightest attention out of the limits of the slave holding States themselves. If truth, reason and conclusive argument, propounded with admirable temper and perfect candour, might be supposed to have an effect on the minds of men, we should think this work would have put an end to agitation on the subject. The author has rendered inappreciable service to the South in enlightening them on the subject of their own institutions, and turning back that monstrous tide of folly and madness which, if it had rolled on, would have involved his own great State along with the rest of the slave holding States in a common ruin. But beyond these, he seems to have produced no effect whatever. The denouncers of Slavery, with whose productions the press groans, seem to be unaware of his existence—unaware that there is reason to be encountered, or argument to be answered. They assume that the truth is known and settled, and only requires to be enforced by denunciation.

Another vindicator of the South has appeared in an individual who is among those that have done honour to American literature.† With conclusive argument, and great force of expression he has defended Slavery from the charge of injustice or immorality, and shewn clearly the unspeakable cruelty and mischief which must result from any scheme of abolition. He does not live among slave holders, and it cannot be said of him as of others, that his mind is warped by interest, or his moral sense blunted by habit and familiarity with abuse. These circumstances, it might be supposed, would have secured him hearing and consideration. He seems to be equally unheeded, and the work of denunciation disdaining argument, still goes on.

President Dew has shewn that the institution of Slavery is a principal cause of civilization. Perhaps nothing can be more evident than that it is the sole cause. If any thing can be predicated as universally true of uncultivated man, it is that he will not labour beyond what is absolutely necessary to maintain his existence. Labour is pain to those who are unaccustomed to it, and the nature of man

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*President Dew's Review of the Virginia Debates on the subject of Slavery.

†Paulding on Slavery.

is averse to pain. Even with all the training, the helps and motives of civilization, we find that this aversion cannot be overcome in many individuals of the most cultivated societies. The coercion of Slavery alone is adequate to form man to habits of labour. Without it, there can be no accumulation of property, no providence for the future, no taste for comforts or elegancies, which are the characteristics and essentials of civilization. He who has obtained the command of another's labour, first begins to accumulate and provide for the future, and the foundations of civilization are laid. We find confirmed by experience that which is so evident in theory. Since the existence of man upon the earth, with no exception whatever, either of ancient or modern times, every society which has attained civilization, has advanced to it through this process.

Will those who regard Slavery as immoral, or crime in itself, tell us that man was not intended for civilization, but to roam the earth as a biped brute? That he was not to raise his eyes to Heaven, or be conformed in his nobler faculties to the image of his Maker? Or will they say that the Judge of all the earth has done wrong in ordaining the means by which alone that end can be attained? It is true that the Creator can make the wickedness as well as the wrath of man to praise him, and bring forth the most benevolent results from the most atrocious actions. But in such cases, it is the motive of the actor alone which condemns the action. The act itself is good, if it promotes the good purposes of God, and would be approved by him, if that result only were intended. Do they not blaspheme the providence of God who denounce as wickedness and outrage, that which is rendered indispensable to his purposes in the government of the world? Or at what stage of the progress of society will they say that Slavery ceases to be necessary, and its very existence becomes sin and crime? I am aware that such argument would have little effect on those with whom it would be degrading to contend—who pervert the inspired writings—which in some parts expressly sanction Slavery, and throughout indicate most clearly that it is a civil institution, with which religion has no concern—with a shallowness and presumption not less flagrant and shameless than his, who would justify murder from the text, "and Phinеas arose and executed judgment."

There seems to be something in this subject, which blunts the perceptions, and darkens and confuses the understandings and moral feelings of men. Tell them that, of necessity, in every civilized society, there must be an infinite variety of conditions and employments, from the most eminent and intellectual, to the most servile and laborious; that the negro race, from their temperament and capacity, are peculiarly suited to the situation which they occupy, and not less happy in it than any corresponding class to be found in the world; prove incontestably that no scheme of emancipation could be carried into effect without the most intolerable mischiefs and calamities to both master and slave, or without probably throwing a large and fertile portion of the earth's surface out of the pale of civilization—and you have done nothing. They reply, that whatever may be the consequence,

you are bound to do *right;* that man has a right to himself, and man cannot have a property in man; that if the negro race be naturally inferior in mind and character, they are not less entitled to the rights of humanity; that if they are happy in their condition, it affords but the stronger evidence of their degradation, and renders them still more objects of commiseration. They repeat, as the fundamental maxim of our civil policy, that all men are born free and equal, and quote from our Declaration of Independence, "that men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable *rights*, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

It is not the first time that I have had occasion to observe that men may repeat with the utmost confidence, some maxim or sentimental phrase, as self-evident or admitted truth, which is either palpably false or to which, upon examination, it will be found that they attach no definite idea. Notwithstanding our respect for the important document which declared our independence, yet if any thing be found in it, and especially in what may be regarded rather as its ornament than its substance—false, sophistical or unmeaning, that respect should not screen it from the freest examination.

All men are born free and equal. Is it not palpably nearer the truth to say that no man was ever born free, and that no two men were ever born equal? Man is born in a state of the most helpless dependence on others. He continues subject to the absolute control of others, and remains without many of the civil, and all of the political privileges of his society, until the period which the laws have fixed, as that at which he is supposed to attain the maturity of his faculties. Then equality is further developed, and becomes infinite in every society, and under whatever form of government. Wealth and poverty, fame or obscurity, strength or weakness, knowledge or ignorance, ease or labor, power or subjection, make the endless diversity in the condition of men.

But we have not arrived at the profundity of the maxim. This inequality is in a great measure the result of abuses in the institutions of society. They do not speak of what exists, but of what ought to exist. Every one should be left at liberty to obtain all the advantages of society which he can compass, by the free exertion of his faculties, unimpeded by civil restraints. It may be said that this would not remedy the evils of society which are complained of. The inequalities to which I have referred, with the misery resulting from them, would exist in fact under the freest and most popular form of government that man would devise. But what is the foundation of the bold dogma so confidently announced? Females are human and rational beings. They may be found of better faculties and better qualified to exercise political privileges and to attain the distinctions of society than many men; yet who complains of the order of society by which they are excluded from them? For I do not speak of the few who would desecrate them; do violence to the nature which their Creator has impressed upon them; drag them from the position which they necessarily occupy for the existence of civilized society, and in which

they constitute its blessing and ornament—the only position which they have ever occupied in any human society—to place them in a situation in which they would be alike miserable and degraded. Low as we descend in combatting the theories of presumptuous dogmatists, it cannot be necessary to stoop to this. A youth of eighteen may have powers which cast into the shade those of any of his more advanced cotemporaries. He may be capable of serving or saving his country, and if not permitted to do so now, the occasion may have been lost forever. But he can exercise no political privilege or aspire to any political distinction. It is said that of necessity, society must exclude from some civil and political privileges those who are unfitted to exercise them, by infirmity, unsuitableness of character, or defect of discretion; that of necessity there must be some general rule on the subject, and that any rule which can be devised will operate with hardship and injustice on individuals. This is all that can be said and all that need be said. It is saying, in other words, that the privileges in question are no matter of natural right, but to be settled by convention, as the good and safety of society may require. If society should disfranchise individuals convicted of infamous crimes, would this be an invasion of natural right? Yet this would not be justified on the score of their moral guilt, but that the good of society required, or would be promoted by it. We admit the existence of a moral law, binding on societies as on individuals. Society must act in good faith. No man or body of men has a right to inflict pain or privation on others, unless with a view, after full and impartial deliberation, to prevent a greater evil. If this deliberation be had, and the decision made in good faith, there can be no imputation of moral guilt. Has any politician contended that the very existence of governments in which there are orders privileged by law, constitutes a violation of morality; that their continuance is a crime, which men are bound to put an end to without any consideration of the good or evil to result from the change? Yet this is the natural inference from the dogma of the natural equality of men as applied to our institution of slavery—an equality not to be invaded without injustice and wrong, and requiring to be restored instantly, unqualifiedly, and without reference to consequences.

This is sufficiently common-place, but we are sometimes driven to common-place. It is no less a false and shallow than a presumptuous philosophy, which theorizes on the affairs of men as of a problem to be solved by some unerring rule of human reason, without reference to the designs of a superior intelligence, so far as he has been pleased to indicate them, in their creation and destiny. Man is born to subjection. Not only during infancy is he dependant and under the control of others; at all ages, it is the very bias of his nature, that the strong and the wise should control the weak and the ignorant. So it has been since the days of Nimrod. The existence of some form of Slavery in all ages and countries, is proof enough of this. He is born to subjection as he is born in sin and ignorance. To make any considerable progress in knowledge, the continued efforts

of successive generations, and the diligent training and unwearied exertions of the individual are requisite. To make progress in moral virtue, not less time and effort, aided by superior help, are necessary; and it is only by the matured exercise of his knowledge and his virtue, that he can attain to civil freedom. Of all things, the existence of civil liberty is most the result of artificial institution. The proclivity of the natural man is to domineer or to be subservient. A noble result indeed, but in the attaining of which, as in the instances of knowledge and virtue, the Creator, for his own purposes, has set a limit beyond which he we cannot go.

But he who is most advanced in knowledge, is most sensible of his own ignorance, and how much must forever be unknown to man in his present condition. As I have heard it expressed, the further you extend the circle of light, the wider is the horizon of darkness. He who has made the greatest progress in moral purity, is most sensible of the depravity, not only of the world around him, but of his own heart and the imperfection of his best motives, and this he knows that men must feel and lament so long as they continue men. So when the greatest progress in civil liberty has been made, the enlightened lover of liberty will know that there must remain much inequality, much injustice, much *Slavery*, which no human wisdom or virtue will ever be able wholly to prevent or redress. As I have before had the honor to say to this Society, the condition of our whole existence is but to struggle with evils—to compare them—to choose between them, and so far as we can, to mitigate them. To say that there is evil in any institution, is only to say that it is human.

And can we doubt but that this long discipline and laborious process, by which men are required to work out the elevation and improvement of their individual nature and their social condition, is imposed for a great and benevolent end? Our faculties are not adequate to the solution of the mystery, why it should be so; but the truth is clear, that the world was not intended for the seat of universal knowledge or goodness or happiness or freedom.

Man has been endowed by his Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. What is meant by the *inalienable* right of liberty? Has any one who has used the words ever asked himself this question? Does it mean that a man has no right to alienate his own liberty—to sell himself and his posterity for slaves? This would seem to be the more obvious meaning. When the word *right* is used, it has reference to some law which sanctions it, and would be violated by its invasion. It must refer either to the general law of morality or the law of the country—the law of God or the law of man. If the law of any country permitted it, it would of course be absurd to say that the law of that country was violated by such alienation. If it have any meaning in this respect, it must mean that though the law of the country permitted it, the man would be guilty of an immoral act who should thus alienate his liberty. A fit question for schoolmen to discuss, and the consequences resulting from its decision as important as from any of

theirs. Yet who will say that the man pressed by famine and in prospect of death, would be criminal for such an act? Self-preservation as is truly said, is the first law of nature. High and peculiar characters, by elaborate cultivation, may be taught to prefer death to Slavery, but it would be folly to prescribe this as a duty to the mass of mankind.

If any rational meaning can be attributed to the sentence I have quoted, it is this:—That the society, or the individuals who exercise the powers of government, are guilty of a violation of the law of God or of morality, when by any law or public act, they deprive men of life or liberty, or restrain them in the pursuit of happiness. Yet every government does, and of necessity must, deprive men of life and liberty for offences against society. Restrain them in the pursuit of happiness! Why all the laws of society are intended for nothing else but to restrain men from the pursuit of happiness, according to their own ideas of happiness or advantage—which the phrase must mean if it means any thing. And by what right does society punish by the loss of life or liberty? Not on account of the moral guilt of the criminal—not by impiously and arrogantly assuming the prerogative of the Almighty, to dispense justice or suffering, according to moral desert. It is for its own protection—it is the right of self-defence. If there existed the blackest moral turpitude, which by its example or consequences, could be of no evil to society, government would have nothing to do with that. If an action, the most harmless in its moral character, could be dangerous to the security of society, society would have the perfect right to punish it. If the possession of a black skin would be otherwise dangerous to society, society has the same right to protect itself by disfranchising the possessor of civil privileges, and to continue the disability to his posterity, if the same danger would be incurred by its removal. Society inflicts these forfeitures for the security of the lives of its members; it inflicts them for the security of their property, the great essential of civilization; it inflicts them also for the protection of its political institutions; the forcible attempt to overturn which, has always been justly regarded as the greatest crime; and who has questioned its right so to inflict? "Man cannot have property in man"—a phrase as full of meaning as, "who slays fat oxen should himself be fat." Certainly he may, if the laws of society allow it, and if it be on sufficient grounds, neither he nor society do wrong.

And is it by this—as we must call it, however recommended to our higher feelings by its associations—well-sounding, but unmeaning verbiage of natural equality and inalienable rights, that our lives are to be put in jeopardy, our property destroyed, and our political institutions overturned or endangered? If a people had on its borders a tribe of barbarians, whom no treaties or faith could bind, and by whose attacks they were constantly endangered, against whom they could devise no security, but that they should be exterminated or enslaved; would they not have the right to enslave them, and keep them in slavery so long as the same danger would be incurred by their manumission?

If a civilized man and a savage were by chance placed together on a desolate island, and the former, by the superior power of civilization, would reduce the latter to subjection, would he not have the same right? Would this not be the strictest self-defence? I do not now consider, how far we can make out a similar case to justify our enslaving of the negroes. I speak to those who contend for inalienable rights, and that the existence of slavery always, and under all circumstances, involves injustice and crime.

As I have said, we acknowledge the existence of a moral law. It is not necessary for us to resort to the theory which resolves all right into force. The existence of such a law is imprinted on the hearts of all human beings. But though its existence be acknowledged, the mind of man has hitherto been tasked in vain to discover an unerring standard of morality. It is a common and undoubted maxim of morality, that you shall not do evil that good may come. You shall not do injustice or commit an invasion of the rights of others, for the sake of a greater ulterior good. But what is injustice, and what are the rights of others? And why are we not to commit the one or invade the others? It is because it inflicts pain or suffering, present or prospective, or cuts them off from enjoyment which they might otherwise attain. The Creator has sufficiently revealed to us that *happiness* is the great end of existence, the sole object of all animated and sentient beings. To this he has directed their aspirations and efforts, and we feel that we thwart his benevolent purposes when we destroy or impede that happiness. This is the only *natural* right of man. All other rights result from the conventions of society, and these, to be sure, we are not to invade, whatever good may appear to us likely to follow. Yet are we in no instance to inflict pain or suffering, or disturb enjoyment for the sake of producing a greater good? Is the madman not to be restrained who would bring destruction on himself or others? Is pain not to be inflicted on the child, when it is the only means by which he can be effectually instructed to provide for his own future happiness? Is the surgeon guilty of wrong who amputates a limb to preserve life? Is it not the object of all penal legislation, to inflict suffering for the sake of greater good to be secured to society?

By what right is it that man exercises dominion over the beasts of the field; subdues them to painful labour, or deprives them of life for his sustenance or enjoyment? They are not rational beings. No, but they are the creatures of God, sentient beings, capable of suffering and enjoyment, and entitled to enjoy according to the measure of their capacities. Does not the voice of nature inform every one, that he is guilty of wrong when he inflicts on them pain without necessity or object? If their existence be limited to the present life, it affords the stronger argument for affording them the brief enjoyment of which it is capable. It is because the greater good is effected; not only to man but to the inferior animals themselves. The care of man gives the boon of existence to myriads who would never otherwise have enjoyed it, and the enjoyment of their existence is better

provided for while it lasts. It belongs to the being of superior faculties to judge of the relations which shall subsist between himself and inferior animals, and the use he shall make of them; and he may justly consider himself, who has the greater capacity of enjoyment, in the first instance. Yet he must do this conscientiously, and no doubt, moral guilt has been incurred by the infliction of pain on these animals, with no adequate benefit to be expected. I do no disparagement to the dignity of human nature, even in its humblest form, when I say that on the very same foundation, with the difference only of circumstance and degree, rests the right of the civilized and cultivated man, over the savage and ignorant. It is the order of nature and of God, that the being of superior faculties and knowledge, and therefore of superior power, should control and dispose of those who are inferior. It is as much in the order of nature, that men should enslave each other, as that other animals should prey upon each other. I admit that he does this under the highest moral responsibility, and is most guilty if he wantonly inflicts misery or privation on beings more capable of enjoyment or suffering than brutes, without necessity or any view to the greater good which is to result. If we conceive of society existing without government, and that one man by his superior strength, courage or wisdom, could obtain the mastery of his fellows, he would have a perfect right to do so. He would be morally responsible for the use of his power, and guilty if he failed to direct them so as to promote their happiness as well as his own. Moralists have denounced the injustice and cruelty which have been practiced towards our aboriginal Indians, by which they have been driven from their native seats and exterminated, and no doubt with much justice. No doubt, much fraud and injustice has been practised in the circumstances and the manner of their removal. Yet who has contended that civilized man had no moral right to possess himself of the country? That he was bound to leave this wide and fertile continent, which is capable of sustaining uncounted myriads of a civilized race, to a few roving and ignorant barbarians? Yet if any thing is certain, it is certain that there were no means by which he could possess the country, without exterminating or enslaving them. Savage and civilized man cannot live together, and the savage can only be tamed by being enslaved or by having slaves. By enslaving alone could he have preserved them.* And who shall take upon himself to decide that the more benevolent course and more pleasing to God, was pursued towards them, or that it would not have been better that they had been enslaved generally, as they were in particular instances? It is a refined philosophy, and utterly false in its application to general nature, or the mass of human kind, which teaches that existence is not the greatest of all boons, and worthy of being preserved even under the most adverse circumstances. The strongest instinct of all animated beings sufficiently proclaims this. When the last red man shall have vanished from our forests, the sole remaining

* I refer to President Dew on this subject.

traces of his blood will be found among our enslaved population.* The African slave trade has given, and will give the boon of existence to millions and millions in our country, who would otherwise never have enjoyed it, and the enjoyment of their existence is better provided for while it lasts. Or if, for the rights of man over inferior animals, we are referred to revelation, which pronounces—"ye shall have dominion over the beasts of the field, and over the fowls of the air," we refer to the same which declares not the less explicitly—

"Both the bondmen and bondmaids which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are among you. Of them shall you buy bondmen and bondmaids."

"Moreover of the children of strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begot in your land, and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them by possession. They shall be your bondmen forever."

In moral investigations, ambiguity is often occasioned by confounding the intrinsic nature of an action, as determined by its consequence, with the motives of the actor, involving moral guilt or innocence. If poison be given with a view to destroy another, and it cures him of disease, the poisoner is guilty, but the act is beneficent in its results. If medicine be given with a view to heal, and it happens to kill, he who administered it is innocent, but the act is a noxious one. If they who begun and prosecuted the slave trade, practised horrible cruelties and inflicted much suffering—as no doubt they did, though these have been much exaggerated—for merely selfish purposes, and with no view to future good, they were morally most guilty. So far as unnecessary cruelty was practised, the motive and the act were alike bad. But if we could be sure that the entire effect of the trade has been to produce more happiness than would otherwise have existed, we must pronounce it good, and that it has happened in the ordering of God's providence, to whom evil cannot be imputed. Moral guilt has not been imputed to Las Casas, and if the importation of African slaves into America, had the effect of preventing more suffering than it inflicted, it was good, both in the motive and the result. I freely admit that, it is hardly possible to justify morally, those who begun and carried on the slave trade. No speculation of future good to be brought about could compensate the enormous amount of evil it occasioned.

If we should refer to the common moral sense of mankind, as determined by their conduct in all ages and countries, for a standard of morality, it would seem to be in favor of Slavery. The will of God, as determined by utility, would be an infallible standard, if we had an unerring measure of utility. The Utilitarian Philosophy, as it is commonly understood, referring only to the animal wants and employments, and physical condition of man, is utterly false and degrading. If a sufficiently extended definition be given to utility, so as to

* It is not uncommon, especially in Charleston, to see slaves, after many descents and having mingled their blood with the Africans, possessing Indian hair and features.

include every thing that may be a source of enjoyment or suffering, it is for the most part useless. How can you compare the pleasures resulting from the exercise of the understanding, the taste and the imagination, with the animal enjoyments of the senses—the gratification derived from a fine poem with that from a rich banquet? How are we to weigh the pains and enjoyments of one man highly cultivated and of great sensibility, against those of many men of blunter capacity for enjoyment or suffering? And if we could determine with certainty in what utility consists, we are so short sighted with respect to consequences—the remote results of our best considered actions, are so often wide of our anticipations, or contrary to them, that we should still be very much in the dark. But though we cannot arrive at absolute certainty with respect to the utility of actions, it is always fairly matter of argument. Though an imperfect standard, it is the best we have, and perhaps the Creator did not intend that we should arrive at perfect certainty with regard to the morality of many actions. If after the most careful examination of consequences that we are able to make, with due distrust of ourselves, we impartially, and in good faith, decide for that which appears likely to produce the greatest good, we are free from moral guilt. And I would impress most earnestly, that with our imperfect and limited faculties, and short sighted as we are to the future, we can rarely, very rarely indeed, be justified in producing considerable present evil or suffering, in the expectation of remote future good—if indeed this can ever be justified.

In considering this subject, I shall not regard it in the first instance in reference to the present position of the Slave-Holding States, or the difficulties which lie in the way of their emancipating their Slaves, but as a naked, abstract question—whether it is better that the institution of praedial and domestic Slavery should, or should not exist in civilized society. And though some of my remarks may seem to have such a tendency, let me not be understood as taking upon myself to determine that it is better that it should exist. God forbid that the responsibility of deciding such a question should ever be thrown on me or my countrymen. But this I will say, and not without confidence, that it is in the power of no human intellect to establish the contrary proposition—that it is better it should not exist. This is probably known but to one being, and concealed from human sagacity.

There have existed in various ages, and we now see existing in the world, people in every stage of civilization, from the most barbarous to the most refined. Man, as I have said, is not born to civilization. He is born rude and ignorant. But it will be, I suppose, admitted that it is the design of his Creator that he should attain to civilization: That religion should be known, that the comforts and elegancies of life should be enjoyed, that letters and arts should be cultivated, in short, that there should be the greatest possible developement of moral and intellectual excellence. It can hardly be necessary to say any thing of those who have extolled the superior virtues and enjoyments of savage life—a life of physical wants and sufferings, of continual insecurity, of furious passions and depraved vices. Those who

have praised savage life, are those who have known nothing of it, or who have become savages themselves. But as I have said, so far as reason or universal experience instruct us, the institution of Slavery is an essential process in emerging from savage life. It must then produce good, and promote the designs of the Creator.

I add further, *that Slavery anticipates the benefits of civilization, and retards the evils of civilization.* The former part of this proposition has been so fully established by a writer of great power of thought—though I fear his practical conclusions will be found of little value—that it is hardly necessary to urge it.* Property—the accumulation of capital, as it is commonly called, is the first element of civilization. But to accumulate, or to use capital to any considerable extent, the combination of labor is necessary. In early stages of society, when people are thinly scattered over an extensive territory, the labor necessary to extensive works, cannot be commanded. Men are independent of each other. Having the command of abundance of land, no one will submit to be employed in the service of his neighbor. No one, therefore, can employ more capital than he can use with his own hands, or those of his family, nor have an income much beyond the necessaries of life. There can, therefore, be little leisure for intellectual pursuits, or means of acquiring the comforts or elegancies of life. It is hardly necessary to say however, that if a man has the command of slaves, he may combine labor, and use capital to any required extent, and therefore accumulate wealth. He shows that no colonies have been successfully planted without some sort of Slavery. So we find the fact to be. It is only in the Slave-Holding States of our confederacy, that wealth can be acquired by agriculture—which is the general employment of our whole country. Among us, we know that there is no one, however humble his beginning, who with persevering industry, intelligence, and orderly and virtuous habits, may not attain to considerable opulence. So far as wealth has been accumulated in the States which do not possess Slaves, it has been in cities by the pursuits of commerce, or lately, by manufactures. But the products of Slave labor furnish more than two-thirds of the materials of our foreign commerce, which the industry of those States is employed in transporting and exchanging; and among the Slave-Holding States is to be found the great market for all the productions of their industry, of whatever kind. The prosperity of those States, therefore, and the civilization of their cities, have been for the most part created by the existence of Slavery. Even in the cities, but for a class of population, which our institutions have marked as servile, it would be scarcely possible to preserve the ordinary habitudes of civilized life, by commanding the necessary menial and domestic service.

Every stage of human society, from the most barbarous to the most refined, has its own peculiar evils to mark it as the condition of mor-

* The author of "England and America." We do, however, most indignantly repudiate his conclusion, that we are bound to submit to a tariff of protection, as an expedient for retaining our Slaves "the force of the whole Union, being required to preserve Slavery, to keep down the Slaves."

tality; and perhaps there is none but omnipotence who can say in which the scale of good or evil most preponderates. We need say nothing of the evils of savage life. There is a state of society elevated somewhat above it, which is to be found in some of the more thinly peopled portions of our own country—the rudest agricultural state—which is thus characterized by the author to whom I have referred. "The American of the back woods has often been described to the English as grossly ignorant, dirty, unsocial, delighting in rum and tobacco, attached to nothing but his rifle, adventurous, restless, more than half savage. Deprived of social enjoyments or excitements, he has recourse to those of savage life, and becomes (for in this respect the Americans degenerate) unfit for society." This is no very inviting picture, which though exaggerated, we know not to be without likeness. The evils of such a State, I suppose, will hardly be thought compensated by unbounded freedom, perfect equality, and ample means of subsistence.

But let us take another stage in the progress—which to many will appear to offer all that is desirable in existence, and realize another Utopia. Let us suppose a state of society in which all shall have property, and there shall be no great inequality of property—in which society shall be so much condensed as to afford the means of social intercourse, without being crowded, so as to create difficulty in obtaining the means of subsistence—in which every family that chooses may have as much land as will employ its own hands, while others may employ their industry in forming such products as it may be desirable to exchange with them. Schools are generally established, and the rudiments of education universally diffused. Religion is taught, and every village has its church, neat though humble, lifting its spire to Heaven. Here is a situation apparently the most favorable to happiness. I say *apparently*, for the greatest source of human misery is not in external circumstances, but in men themselves—in their depraved inclinations, their wayward passions and perverse wills. Here is room for all the petty competition, the envy, hatred, malice and dissimulation, that torture the heart in what may be supposed the most sophisticated states of society; and though less marked and offensive, there may be much of the licentiousness.

But apart from this, in such a condition of society, if there is little suffering, there is little high enjoyment. The even flow of life forbids the high excitement which is necessary for it. If there is little vice, there is little place for the eminent virtues, which employ themselves in controlling the disorders and remedying the evils of society, which like war and revolution, call forth the highest powers of man, whether for good or for evil. If there is little misery, there is little room for benevolence. Useful public institutions we may suppose to be created, but not such as are merely ornamental. Elegant arts can be little cultivated, for there are no means to reward the artists nor the higher literature, for no one will have leisure or means to cultivate it for its own sake. Those who acquire what may be called liberal education, will do so in order to employ it as the means of their own subsistence

or advancement in a profession, and literature itself will partake of the sordidness of trade. In short, it is plain that in such a state of society, the moral and intellectual faculties cannot be cultivated to their highest perfection.

But whether that which I have described be the most desirable state of society or no, it is certain that it cannot continue. Mutation and progress is the condition of human affairs. Though retarded for a time by extraneous or accidental circumstances, the wheel must roll on. The tendency of population is to become crowded, increasing the difficulty of obtaining subsistence. There will be some without any property except the capacity for labor. This they must sell to those who have the means of employing them, thereby swelling the amount of their capital, and increasing inequality. The process still goes on. The number of laborers increases until there is a difficulty in obtaining employment. Then competition is established. The remuneration of the labor becomes gradually less and less; a larger and larger proportion of the product of his labor goes to swell the fortune of the capitalist; inequality becomes still greater and more invidious, until the process ends in the establishment of such a state of things, as the same author describes as now existing in England. After a most imposing picture of her greatness and resources; of her superabounding capital, and all-pervading industry and enterprize; of her public institutions for purposes of art, learning and benevolence; her public improvements, by which intercourse is facilitated, and the convenience of man subserved; the conveniences and luxuries of life enjoyed by those who are in possession of fortune, or have profitable employments; of all, in short, that places her at the head of modern civilization, he proceeds to give the reverse of the picture. And here I shall use his own words. "The laboring class compose the bulk of the people; the great body of the people; the vast majority of the people—these are the terms by which English writers and speakers usually describe those whose only property is their labor."

"Of comprehensive words, the two most frequently used in English politics, are distress and pauperism. After these, of expressions applied to the state of the poor, the most common are vice and misery, wretchedness, sufferings, ignorance, degradation, discontent, depravity, drunkenness, and the increase of crime; with many more of the like nature."

He goes on to give the details of this inequality and wretchedness, in terms calculated to sicken and appal one to whom the picture is new. That he has painted strongly we may suppose; but there is ample corroborating testimony, if such were needed, that the representation is substantially just. Where so much misery exists, there must of course be much discontent, and many have been disposed to trace the sources of the former in vicious legislation, or the structure of government; and the author gives the various schemes, sometimes contradictory, sometimes ludicrous, which projectors have devised as a remedy for all this evil to which flesh is heir. That ill judged legislation may have sometimes aggravated the general suffering, or that

its extremity may be mitigated by the well directed efforts of the wise and virtuous, there can be no doubt. One purpose for which it has been permitted to exist is, that it may call forth such efforts, and awaken powers and virtues which would otherwise have slumbered for want of object. But remedy there is none, unless it be to abandon their civilization. This inequality, this vice, this misery, this *Slavery*, is the price of England's civilization. They suffer the lot of humanity. But perhaps we may be permitted humbly to hope, that great, intense and widely spread as this misery undoubtedly is in reality, it may yet be less so than in appearance. We can estimate but very, very imperfectly the good and evil of individual condition, as of different states of society. Some unexpected solace arises to animate the severest calamity. Wonderful is the power of custom, in making the hardest condition tolerable; the most generally wretched life, has circumstances of mitigation, and moments of vivid enjoyment, of which the more seemingly happy can scarcely conceive; though the lives of individuals be shortened, the aggregate of existence is increased; even the various forms of death accelerated by want, familiarized to the contemplation, like death to the soldier on the field of battle, may become scarcely more formidable, than what we are accustomed to regard as nature's ordinary outlets of existence. If we could perfectly analyze the enjoyments and sufferings of the most happy, and the most miserable man, we should perhaps be startled to find the difference so much less than our previous impressions had led us to conceive. But it is not for us to assume the province of omniscience. The particular theory of the author quoted, seems to be founded on an assumption of this sort—that there is a certain stage in the progress, when there is a certain balance between the demand for labor, and the supply of it, which is more desirable than any other—when the territory is so thickly peopled that all cannot own land and cultivate the soil for themselves, but a portion will be compelled to sell their labor to others; still leaving, however, the wages of labor high, and the laborer independent. It is plain, however, that this would in like manner partake of the good and the evil of other states of society. There would be less of equality and less rudeness, than in the early stages; less civilization, and less suffering, than in the latter.

It is the competition for employment, which is the source of this misery of society, that gives rise to all excellence in art and knowledge. When the demand for labor exceeds the supply, the services of the most ordinarily qualified laborer will be eagerly retained. When the supply begins to exceed, and competition is established, higher and higher qualifications will be required, until at length when it becomes very intense, none but the most consummately skilful can be sure to be employed. Nothing but necessity can drive men to the exertions which are necessary so to qualify themselves. But it is not in arts, merely mechanical alone, that this superior excellence will be required. It will be extended to every intellectual employment; and though this may not be the effect in the instance of

every individual, yet it will fix the habits and character of the society, and prescribe every where, and in every department, the highest possible standard of attainment.

But how is it that the existence of Slavery as with us, will retard the evils of civilization? Very obviously. It is the intense competition of civilized life, that gives rise to the excessive cheapness of labor, and the excessive cheapness of labor is the cause of the evils in question. Slave labor can never be so cheap as what is called free labor. Political economists have established as the natural standard of wages in a fully peopled country, the value of the laborer's subsistence. I shall not stop to inquire into the precise truth of this proposition. It certainly approximates the truth. Where competition is intense, men will labor for a bare subsistence, and less than a competent subsistence. The employer of free laborers obtains their services during the time of their health and vigor, without the charge of rearing them from infancy, or supporting them in sickness or old age. This charge is imposed on the employer of Slave labor, who, therefore, pays higher wages, and cuts off the principal source of misery—the wants and sufferings of infancy, sickness, and old age. Laborers too will be less skilful, and perform less work—enhancing the price of that sort of labor. The poor laws of England are an attempt—but an awkward and empirical attempt—to supply the place of that which we should suppose the feelings of every human heart would declare to be a natural obligation—that he who has received the benefit of the laborer's services during his health and vigor, should maintain him when he becomes unable to provide for his own support. They answer their purpose, however, very imperfectly, and are unjustly, and unequally imposed. There is no attempt to apportion the burden according to the benefit received—and perhaps there could be none. This is one of the evils of their condition.

In periods of commercial revulsion and distress, like the present, the distress, in countries of free labor, falls principally on the laborers. In those of Slave labor, it falls almost exclusively on the employer. In the former, when a business becomes unprofitable, the employer dismisses his laborers or lowers their wages. But with us, it is the very period at which we are least able to dismiss our laborers; and if we would not suffer a further loss, we cannot reduce their wages. To receive the benefit of the services of which they are capable, we must provide for maintaining their health and vigor. In point of fact, we know that this is accounted among the necessary expenses of management. If the income of every planter of the Southern States, were permanently reduced one half, or even much more than that, it would not take one jot from the support and comforts of the Slaves. And this can never be materially altered, until they shall become so unprofitable that Slavery must be of necessity abandoned. It is probable that the accumulation of individual wealth will never be carried to quite so great an extent in a Slave-Holding country, as in one of free labor; but a consequence will be, that there will be less inequality and less suffering.

Servitude is the condition of civilization. It was decreed, when the command was given, "be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it," and when it was added, "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." And what human being shall arrogate to himself the authority to pronounce that our form of it is worse in itself, or more displeasing to God than that which exists elsewhere? Shall it be said that the servitude of other countries grows out of the exigency of their circumstances, and therefore society is not responsible for it? But if we know that in the progress of things it is to come, would it not seem the part of wisdom and foresight, to make provision for it, and thereby, if we can, mitigate the severity of its evils? But the fact is not so. Let any one who doubts, read the book to which I have several times referred, and he may be satisfied that it was forced upon us by the extremest exigency of circumstances, in a struggle for very existence. Without it, it is doubtful whether a white man would be now existing on this continent—certain, that if there were, they would be in a state of the utmost destitution, weakness and misery. It was forced on us by necessity, and further fastened upon us, by the superior authority of the mother country. I, for one, neither deprecate nor resent the gift. Nor did we institute Slavery. The Africans brought to us had been, speaking in the general, slaves in their own country, and only underwent a change of masters. In the countries of Europe, and the States of our Confederacy, in which Slavery has ceased to exist, it was abolished by positive legislation. If the order of nature has been departed from, and a forced and artificial state of things introduced, it has been, as the experience of all the world declares, by them and not by us.

That there are great evils in a society where slavery exists, and that the institution is liable to great abuse, I have already said. To say otherwise, would be to say that they were not human. But the whole of human life is a system of evils and compensations. We have no reason to believe that the compensations with us are fewer, or smaller in proportion to the evils, than those of any other condition of society. Tell me of an evil or abuse; of an instance of cruelty, oppression, licentiousness, crime or suffering, and I will point out, and often in five fold degree, an equivalent evil or abuse in countries where Slavery does not exist?

Let us examine without blenching, the actual and alleged evils of Slavery, and the array of horrors which many suppose to be its universal concomitants. It is said that the Slave is out of the protection of the law; that if the law purports to protect him in life and limb, it is but imperfectly executed; that he is still subject to excessive labor, degrading blows, or any other sort of torture, which a master pampered and brutalized by the exercise of arbitrary power, may think proper to inflict; he is cut off from the opportunity of intellectual, moral, or religious improvement, and even positive enactments are directed against his acquiring the rudiments of knowledge; he is cut off forever from the hope of raising his condition in society, whatever may be his merit, talents, or virtues, and therefore depri-

ved of the strongest incentive to useful and praiseworthy exertion; his physical degradation begets a corresponding moral degradation; he is without moral principle, and addicted to the lowest vices, particularly theft and falsehood; if marriage be not disallowed, it is little better than a state of concubinage, from which results general licentiousness, and the want of chastity among females—this indeed is not protected by law, but is subject to the outrages of brutal lust; both sexes are liable to have their dearest affections violated; to be sold like brutes; husbands to be torn from wives, children from parents;—this is the picture commonly presented by the denouncers of Slavery.

It is a somewhat singular fact, that when there existed in our State no law for punishing the murder of a slave, other than a pecuniary fine, there were, I will venture to say, at least ten murders of freemen, for one murder of a slave. Yet it is supposed they are less protected, or less secure than their masters. Why they are protected by their very situation in society, and therefore less need the protection of law. With any other person than their master, it is hardly possible for them to come into such sort of collision as usually gives rise to furious and revengeful passions; they offer no temptation to the murderer for gain; against the master himself, they have the security of his own interest, and by his superintendence and authority, they are protected from the revengeful passions of each other. I am by no means sure that the cause of humanity has been served by the change in jurisprudence, which has placed their murder on the same footing with that of a freeman. The change was made in subserviency to the opinions and clamor of others, who were utterly incompetent to form an opinion on the subject; and a wise act is seldom the result of legislation in this spirit. From the fact which I have stated, it is plain that they less need protection Juries are, therefore, less willing to convict, and it may sometimes happen that the guilty will escape all punishment. *Security* is one of the compensations of their humble position. We challenge the comparison, that with us there have been fewer murders of Slaves, than of parents, children, apprentices, and other murders, cruel and unnatural, in society where Slavery does not exist.

But short of life or limb, various cruelties may be practised as the passions of the master may dictate. To this the same reply has been often given—that they are secured by the master's interest. If the state of Slavery is to exist at all, the master must have, and ought to have, such power of punishment as will compel them to perform the duties of their station. And is not this for their advantage as well as his? No human being can be contented, who does not perform the duties of his station. Has the master any temptation to go beyond this? If he inflicts on him such punishment as will permanently impair his strength, he inflicts a loss on himself, and so if he requires of him excessive labor. Compare the labor required of the Slave, with those of the free agricultural, or manufacturing laborer in Europe, or even in the more thickly peopled portions of the non-Slave-Holding States of our Confederacy—though these last are no

fair subjects of comparison—they enjoying, as I have said, in a great degree, the advantages of Slavery along with those of an early and simple state of society. Read the English Parliamentary reports, on the condition of the manufacturing operatives, and the children employed in factories. And such is the impotence of man to remedy the evils which the condition of his existence has imposed on him, that it is much to be doubted whether the attempts by legislation to improve their situation, will not aggravate its evils. They resort to this excessive labor as a choice of evils. If so, the amount of their compensation will be lessened also with the diminished labor; for this is a matter which legislation cannot regulate. Is it the part of benevolence then to cut them off even from this miserable liberty of choice? Yet would these evils exist in the same degree, if the laborers were the *property* of the master—having a direct interest in preserving their lives, their health and strength? Who but a drivelling fanatic, has thought of the necessity of protecting domestic animals from the cruelty of their owners? And yet are not great and wanton cruelties practised on these animals? Compare the whole of the cruelties inflicted on Slaves throughout our Southern country, with those elsewhere, inflicted by ignorant and depraved portions of the community, on those whom the relations of society put into their power—of brutal husbands on their wives; of brutal parents—subdued against the strongest instincts of nature to that brutality by the extremity of their misery—on their children; of brutal masters on apprentices. And if it should be asked, are not similar cruelties inflicted, and miseries endured in your society? I answer in no comparable degree. The class in question are placed under the control of others, who are interested to restrain their excesses of cruelty or rage. Wives are protected from their husbands, and children from their parents. And this is no inconsiderable compensation of the evils of our system; and would so appear, if we could form any conception of the immense amount of misery which is elsewhere thus inflicted. The other class of society, more elevated in their position, are also (speaking of course in the general) more elevated in character, and more responsible to public opinion.

But besides the interest of their master, there is another security against cruelty. The relation of Master and Slave, when there is no mischievous interference between them, is as the experience of all the world declares, naturally one of kindness. As to the fact, we should be held interested witnesses, but we appeal to universal nature. Is it not natural that a man should be attached to that which is *his own*, and which has contributed to his convenience, his enjoyment, or his vanity? This is felt even towards animals, and inanimate objects. How much more towards a being of superior intelligence and usefulness, who can appreciate our feelings towards him, and return them? Is it not natural that we should be interested in that which is dependant on us for protection and support? Do not men every where contract kind feelings towards their dependants? Is it not natural that men should be more attached to those whom they have

long known—whom, perhaps, they have reared or been associated with from infancy—than to one with whom their connexion has been casual and temporary? What is there in our atmosphere or institutions, to produce a perversion of the general feelings of nature? To be sure, in this as in all other relations, there is frequent cause of offence or excitement—on one side, for some omission of duty, on the other, on account of reproof or punishment inflicted. But this is common to the relation of parent and child; and I will venture to say that if punishment be justly inflicted—and there is no temptation to inflict it unjustly—it is as little likely to occasion permanent estrangement or resentment as in that case. Slaves are perpetual children. It is not the common nature of man, unless it be depraved by his own misery, to delight in witnessing pain. It is more grateful to behold contented and cheerful beings, than sullen and wretched ones. That men are sometimes wayward, depraved and brutal, we know. That atrocious and brutal cruelties have been perpetrated on Slaves, and on those who were not Slaves, by such wretches, we also know. But that the institution of Slavery has a natural tendency to form such a character, that such crimes are more common, or more aggravated than in other states of society, or produce among us less surprise and horror, we utterly deny, and challenge the comparison. Indeed I have little hesitation in saying, that if full evidence could be obtained, the comparison would result in our favor, and that the tendency of Slavery is rather to humanize than to brutalize.

The accounts of travellers in oriental countries, give a very favorable representation of the kindly relations which exist between the Master and Slave; the latter being often the friend, and sometimes the heir of the former. Generally, however, especially if they be English travellers—if they say any thing which may seem to give a favorable complexion to Slavery, they think it necessary to enter their protest, that they shall not be taken to give any sanction to Slavery as it exists in America. Yet human nature is the same in all countries. There are very obvious reasons why in those countries there should be a nearer approach to equality in their manners. The master and Slave are often of cognate races, and therefore tend more to assimilate. There is in fact less inequality in mind and character, where the master is but imperfectly civilized. Less labor is exacted, because the master has fewer motives to accumulate. But is it an injury to a human being, that regular, if not excessive labor should be required of him? The primeval curse, with the usual benignity of providential contrivance, has been turned into the solace of an existence that would be much more intolerable without it. If they labor less, they are much more subject to the outrages of capricious passion. If it were put to the choice of any human being, would he prefer to be the Slave of a civilized man, or of a barbarian or semi-barbarian? But if the general tendency of the institution in those countries is to create kindly relations, can it be imagined why it should operate differently in this? It is true, as suggested by President Dew—with the exception of the ties of close consanguinity, it forms one of the most

intimate relations of society. And it will be more and more so, the longer it continues to exist. The harshest features of Slavery were created by those who were strangers to Slavery—who supposed that it consisted in keeping savages in subjection by violence and terror. The severest laws to be found on our statute book, were enacted by such, and such are still found to be the severest masters. As society becomes settled, and the wandering habits of our countrymen altered, there will be a larger and larger proportion of those who were reared by the owner, or derived to him from his ancestors, and who therefore will be more and more intimately regarded, as forming a portion of his family.

It is true that the Slave is driven to labor by stripes; and if the object of punishment be to produce obedience or reformation, with the least permanent injury, it is the best method of punishment. But is it not intolerable, that a being formed in the image of his Maker, should be degraded by *blows?* This is one of the perversions of mind and feeling, to which I shall have occasion again to refer. Such punishment would be degrading to a freeman, who had the thoughts and aspirations of a freeman. In general it is not degrading to a Slave, nor is it felt to be so. The evil is the bodily pain. Is it degrading to a child? Or if in any particular instance it would be so felt, it is sure not to be inflicted—unless in those rare cases which constitute the startling and eccentric evils, from which no society is exempt, and against which no institutions of society can provide.

The Slave is cut off from the means of intellectual, moral, and religious improvement, and in consequence his moral character becomes depraved, and he addicted to degrading vices. The Slave receives such instruction as qualifies him to discharge the duties of his particular station. The Creator did not intend that every individual human being should be highly cultivated, morally and intellectually, for as we have seen, he has imposed conditions on society which would render this impossible. There must be general mediocrity, or the highest cultivation must exist along with ignorance, vice, and degradation. But is there in the aggregate of society, less opportunity for intellectual and moral cultivation, on account of the existence of Slavery? We must estimate institutions from their aggregate of good or evil. I refer to the views which I have before expressed to this society. It is by the existence of Slavery, exempting so large a portion of our citizens from the necessity of bodily labor, that we have a greater proportion than any other people, who have leisure for intellectual pursuits, and the means of attaining a liberal education. If we throw away this opportunity, we shall be morally responsible for the neglect or abuse of our advantages, and shall most unquestionably pay the penalty. But the blame will rest on ourselves, and not on the character of our institutions.

I add further, notwithstanding that *equality* seems to be the passion of the day, if, as Providence has evidently decreed, there can be but a certain portion of intellectual excellence in any community, it is better that it should be *unequally* divided. It is better that a part

should be fully, and highly cultivated, and the rest utterly ignorant. To constitute a society, a variety of offices must be discharged, from those requiring but the lowest degree of intellectual power, to those requiring the very highest, and it should seem that the endowments ought to be apportioned according to the exigencies of the situation. In the course of human affairs, there arise difficulties which can only be comprehended, or surmounted by the strongest native power of intellect, strengthened by the most assiduous exercise, and enriched with the most extended knowledge—and even these are sometimes found inadequate to the exigency. The first want of society is—leaders. Who shall estimate the value to Athens, of Solon, Aristides, Themistocles, Cymon, or Pericles? If society have not leaders qualified as I have said, they will have those who will lead them blindly to their loss and ruin. Men of no great native power of intellect, and of imperfect and superficial knowledge, are the most mischievous of all—none are so busy, meddling, confident, presumptuous, and intolerant. The whole of society receives the benefit of the exertions of a mind of extraordinary endowments. Of all communities, one of the least desirable, would be that in which imperfect, superficial, half-education should be universal. The first care of a State which regards its own safety, prosperity and honor, should be, that when minds of extraordinary power appear, to whatever department of knowledge, art or science, their exertions may be directed, the means should be provided of their most consummate cultivation. Next to this, that education should be as widely extended as possible.

Odium has been cast upon our legislation, on account of its forbidding the elements of education to be communicated to Slaves. But in truth what injury is done to them by this? He who works during the day with his hands, does not read in intervals of leisure for his amusement, or the improvement of his mind—or the exceptions are so very rare, as scarcely to need the being provided for. Of the many Slaves whom I have known capable of reading, I have never known one to read any thing but the Bible, and this task they impose on themselves as matter of duty. Of all methods of religious instruction, however, this, of reading for themselves would be the most inefficient—their comprehension is defective, and the employment is to them an unusual and laborious one. There are but very few who do not enjoy other means, more effectual for religious instruction. There is no place of worship opened for the white population, from which they are excluded. I believe it a mistake, to say that the instructions there given are not adapted to their comprehension, or calculated to improve them. If they are given as they ought to be—practically, and without pretension, and are such as are generally intelligible to the free part of the audience, comprehending all grades of intellectual capacity, they will not be unintelligible to Slaves. I doubt whether this be not better than instruction, addressed specially to themselves—which they might look upon as a device of the master's, to make them more obedient and profitable to himself. Their minds, generally, shew a strong religious tendency, and they

are fond of assuming the office of religious instructers to each other! and perhaps their religious notions are not much more extravagant than those of a large portion of the free population of our country. I am not sure that there is a much smaller proportion of them, than of the free population, who make some sort of religious profession. It is certainly the master's *interest* that they should have proper religious sentiments, and if he fails in his duty towards them, we may be sure that the consequences will be visited not upon them, but upon him.

If there were any chance of their elevating their rank and condition in society, it might be matter of hardship, that they should be debarred those rudiments of knowledge which open the way to further attainments. But this they know cannot be, and that further attainments would be useless to them. Of the evil of this, I shall speak hereafter. A knowledge of reading, writing, and the elements of arithmetic, is convenient and important to the free laborer, who is the transactor of his own affairs, and the guardian of his own interests—but of what use would they be to the slave? These alone do not elevate the mind or character, if such elevation were desirable.

If we estimate their morals according to that which should be the standard of a free man's morality, then I grant they are degraded in morals—though by no means to the extent which those who are unacquainted with the institution seem to suppose. We justly suppose, that the Creator will require of man, the performance of the duties of the station in which his Providence has placed him, and the cultivation of the virtues which are adapted to their performance; that he will make allowance for all imperfection of knowledge, and the absence of the usual helps and motives which lead to self correction and improvement The degradation of morals relates principally to loose notions of honesty, leading to petty thefts; to falsehood and to licentious intercourse between the sexes. Though with respect even to these, I protest against the opinion which seems to be elsewhere entertained, that they are universal, or that slaves, in respect to them, might not well bear a comparison with the lowest laborious class of other countries. But certainly there is much dishonesty leading to petty thefts. It leads, however, to nothing else. They have no contracts or dealings which might be a temptation to fraud, nor do I know that their characters have any tendency that way. They are restrained by the constant, vigilant, and interested superintendence which is exercised over them, from the commission of offences of greater magnitude—even if they were disposed to them—which I am satisfied they are not. Nothing is so rarely heard of, as an atrocious crime committed by a slave; especially since they have worn off the savage character which their progenitors brought with them from Africa. Their offences are confined to petty depredations, principally for the gratification of their appetites, and these for reasons already given, are chiefly confined to the property of their owner, which is most exposed to them. They could make no use of a considerable booty, if they should obtain it. It is plain that this is a less evil to society in its consequences and example, than if committed by a freeman, who is master of his own

time and actions. With reference to society then, the offence is less in itself—and may we not hope that it is less in the sight of God. A slave has no hope that by a course of integrity, he can materially elevate his condition in society, nor can his offence materially depress it, or affect his means of support, or that of his family. Compared to the freeman, he has no character to establish or to lose. He has not been exercised to self-government, and being without intellectual resources, can less resist the solicitations of appetite. Theft in a freeman is a crime; in a slave, it is a vice. I recollect to have heard it said, in reference to some question of a slave's theft which was agitated in a Court, "Courts of Justice have no more to do with a slave's stealing, than with his lying—that is a matter for the domestic forum." It was truly said—the theft of a slave is no offence against society. Compare all the evils resulting from this, with the enormous amount of vice, crime and depravity, which in an European, or one of our Northern cities, disgusts the moral feelings, and render life and property insecure. So with respect to his falsehood. I have never heard or observed, that slaves have any peculiar proclivity to falsehood, unless it be in denying, or concealing their own offences, or those of their fellows. I have never heard of falsehood told by a slave for a malicious purpose. Lies of vanity are sometimes told, as among the weak and ignorant of other conditions. Falsehood is not attributed to an individual charged with an offence before a Court of Justice, who pleads *not guilty*—and certainly the strong temptation to escape punishment, in the highest degree extenuates, if it does not excuse, falsehood told by a *slave*. If the object be to screen a fellow slave, the act bears some semblance of fidelity, and perhaps truth could not be told without breach of confidence. I know not how to characterize the falsehood of a slave.

It has often been said by the denouncers of Slavery, that marriage does not exist among slaves. It is difficult to understand this, unless wilful falsehood were intended. We know that marriages are contracted; may be, and often are, solemnized with the forms usual among other classes of society, and often faithfully adhered to during life. The law has not provided for making those marriages indissoluble, nor could it do so. If a man abandons his wife, being without property, and being both property themselves, he cannot be required to maintain her. If he abandons his wife, and lives in a state of concubinage with another, the law cannot punish him for bigamy. It may perhaps be meant that the chastity of wives is not protected by law from the outrages of violence. I answer, as with respect to their lives, that they are protected by manners, and their position. Who ever heard of such outrages being offered? At least as seldom, I will venture to say, as in other communities of different forms of polity. Our reason doubtless may be, that often there is no disposition to resist. Another reason also may be, that there is little temptation to such violence, as there is so large a proportion of this class of females who set little value on chastity, and afford easy gratification to the hot passions of men. It might be supposed, from the representa-

tions of some writers, that a slave-holding country were one wide stew for the indulgence of unbridled lust. Particular instances of intemperate and shameless debauchery are related, which may perhaps be true, and it is left to be inferred that this is the universal state of manners. Brutes and shameless debauchees there are in every country; we know that if such things are related as general or characteristic, the representation is false. Who would argue from the existence of a Col. Chartres in England, or of some individuals who might, perhaps, be named in other portions of this country, of the horrid dissoluteness of manners occasioned by the want of the institution of Slavery. Yet the argument might be urged quite as fairly, and really it seems to me with a little more justice—for there such depravity is attended with much more pernicious consequences. Yet let us not deny or extenuate the truth. It is true that in this respect the morals of this class are very loose, (by no means so universally so as is often supposed,) and that the passions of men of the superior caste, tempt and find gratification in the easy chastity of the females. This is evil, and to be remedied, if we can do so, without the introduction of greater evil. But evil is incident to every condition of society, and as I have said, we have only to consider in which institution it most predominates.

Compare these prostitutes of our country, (if it is not injustice to call them so,) and their condition with those of other countries—the seventy thousand prostitutes of London, or of Paris, or the ten thousand of New-York, or our other Northern cities. Take the picture given of the first from the author whom I have before quoted. "The laws and customs of England, conspire to sink this class of English women into a state of vice and misery, below that which necessarily belongs to their condition. Hence, their extreme degradation, their troopers' oaths, their love of gin, their desperate recklessness, and the shortness of their miserable lives."

"English women of this class, or rather girls, for few of them live to be women, die like sheep with the rot; so fast that soon there would be none left, if a fresh supply were not obtained equal to the number of deaths. But a fresh supply is always obtained without the least trouble: seduction easily keeps pace with prostitution or mortality. Those that die are, like factory children that die, instantly succeeded by new competitors for misery and death." There is no hour of a summer's or a winter's night, in which there may not be found in the streets a ghastly wretch, expiring under the double tortures of disease and famine. Though less aggravated in its features, the picture of prostitution in New-York or Philadelphia would be of like character.

In such communities, the unmarried woman who becomes a mother, is an outcast from society—and though sentimentalists lament the hardship of the case, it is justly and necessarily so. She is cut off from the hope of useful and profitable employment, and driven by necessity to further vice. Her misery, and the hopelessness of retrieving, render her desperate, until she sinks into every depth of depravity, and is prepared for every crime that can contaminate and infest socie-

ty. She has given birth to a human being, who, if it be so unfortunate as to survive its miserable infancy, is commonly educated to a like course of vice, depravity and crime.

Compare with this the female slave under similar circumstances. She is not a less useful member of society than before. If shame be attached to her conduct, it is such shame as would be elsewhere felt for a venial impropriety. She has not impaired her means of support, nor materially impaired her character, or lowered her station in society; she has done no great injury to herself, or any other human being. Her offspring is not a burden, but an acquisition to her owner; his support is provided for, and he is brought up to usefulness; if the fruit of intercourse with a freeman, his condition is, perhaps, raised somewhat above that of his mother. Under these circumstances, with imperfect knowledge, tempted by the strongest of human passions—unrestrained by the motives which operate to restrain, but are so often found insufficient to restrain the conduct of females elsewhere, can it be matter of surprise that she should so often yield to the temptation? Is not the evil less in itself, and in reference to society—much less in the sight of God and man. As was said of the—t—the want of chastity, which among females of other countries, is sometimes vice, sometimes crime—among the free of our own, much more aggravated; among slaves, hardly deserves a harsher turn than that of weakness. I have heard of complaint made by a free prostitute, of the greater countenance and indulgence shewn by society towards colored persons of her profession, (always regarded as of an inferior and servile class, though individually free,) than to those of her own complexion. The former readily obtain employment; are even admitted into families, and treated with some degree of kindness and familiarity, while any approach to intercourse with the latter is shunned as contamination. The distinction is habitually made, and it is founded on the unerring instinct of nature. The colored prostitute is, in fact, a far less contaminated and depraved being. Still many, in spite of temptation, do preserve a perfectly virtuous conduct, and I imagine it hardly ever entered into the mind of one of these, that she was likely to be forced from it by authority or violence.

It may be asked, if we have no prostitutes from the free class of society among ourselves. I answer in no assignable proportion. With general truth, it might be said, that there are none. When such a case occurs, it is among the rare evils of society. And apart from other and better reasons, which we believe to exist, it is plain that it must be so, from the comparative absence of temptation. Our brothels, comparatively very few—and these should not be permitted to exist at all—are filled, for the most part, by importation from the cities of our confederate States, where Slavery does not exist. In return for the benefits which they receive from our Slavery, along with tariffs, libels, opinions moral, religious, or political—they furnish us also with a supply of thieves and prostitutes. Never, but in a single instance, have I heard of an imputation on the general purity of manners, among the free females of the slave-holding States. Such an

imputation, however, and made in coarse terms, we have never heard here—*here* where divorce was never known—where no Court was ever polluted by an action for criminal conversation with a wife—where it is related rather as matter of tradition, not unmingled with wonder, that a Carolinian woman of education and family, proved false to her conjugal faith—an imputation deserving only of such reply as self-respect would forbid us to give, if respect for the author of it did not. And can it be doubted, that this purity is caused by, and is a compensation for the evils resulting from the existence of an enslaved class of more relaxed morals?

It is mostly the warm passions of youth, which give rise to licentious intercourse. But I do not hesitate to say, that the intercourse which takes place with enslaved females, is less depraving in its effects, than when it is carried on with females of their own caste. In the first place, as like attracts like, that which is unlike repels; and though the strength of passion be sufficient to overcome the repulsion, still the attraction is less. He feels that he is connecting himself with one of an inferior and servile caste, and that there is something of degradation in the act. The intercourse is generally casual; he does not make her habitually an associate, and is less likely to receive any taint from her habits and manners. He is less liable to those extraordinary fascinations, with which worthless women sometimes entangle their victims, to the utter destruction of all principle, worth and vigor of character, The female of his own race offers greater allurements. The haunts of vice often present a shew of elegance, and various luxury tempts the senses. They are made an habitual resort, and their inmates associates, till the general character receives a taint from the corrupted atmosphere. Not only the practice is licentious, but the understanding is sophisticated; the moral feelings are bewildered, and the boundaries of virtue and vice confused. Where such licentiousness very extensively prevails, society is rotten to the heart.

But is it a small compensation for the evils attending the relation of the sexes among the enslaved class, that they have universally the opportunity of indulging the first instinct of nature, by forming matrimonial connexions? What painful restraint—what constant effort to struggle against the strongest impulses, are habitually practised elsewhere, and by other classes? And they must be practised, unless greater evils would be encountered. On the one side, all the evils of vice, with the miseries to which it leads—on the other, a marriage cursed and made hateful by want—the sufferings of children, and agonizing apprehensions concerning their future fate. Is it a small good, that the slave is free from all this? He knows that his own subsistence is secure, and that his children will be in as good a condition as himself. To a refined and intellectual nature, it may not be difficult to practise the restraint of which I have spoken. But the reasoning from such to the great mass of mankind, is most fallacious. To these, the supply of their natural and physical wants, and the indulgence of the natural domestic affections, must, for the most part, afford the greatest good of which they are capable. To the evils

which sometimes attend their matrimonial connexions, arising from their looser morality, slaves, for obvious reasons, are comparatively insensible. I am no apologist of vice, nor would I extenuate the conduct of the profligate and unfeeling, who would violate the sanctity of even these engagements, and occasion the pain which such violations no doubt do often inflict. Yet such is the truth, and we cannot make it otherwise. We know, that a woman's having been before a mother, is very seldom indeed an objection to her being made a wife. I know perfectly well how this will be regarded by a class of reasoners or declaimers, as imposing a character of deeper horror on the whole system; but still, I will say, that if they are to be exposed to the evil, it is mercy that the sensibility to it should be blunted. Is it no compensation also for the vices incident to Slavery, that they are, to a great degree, secured against the temptation to greater crimes, and more atrocious vices, and the miseries which attend them; against their own disposition to indolence, and the profligacy which is its common result?

But if they are subject to the vices, they have also the virtues of slaves. Fidelity—often proof against all temptation—even death itself—an eminently cheerful and social temper—what the Bible imposes as a duty, but which might seem an equivocal virtue in the code of modern morality—submission to constituted authority, and a disposition to be attached to, as well as to respect those whom they are taught to regard as superiors. They may have all the knowledge which will make them useful in the station in which God has been pleased to place them, and may cultivate the virtues which will render them acceptable to him. But what has the slave of any country to do with heroic virtues, liberal knowledge, or elegant accomplishments? It is for the master; arising out of his situation—imposed on him as duty—dangerous and disgraceful if neglected—to compensate for this, by his own more assiduous cultivation, of the more generous virtues, and liberal attainments.

It has been supposed one of the great evils of Slavery, that it affords the slave no opportunity of raising himself to a higher rank in society, and that he has, therefore, no inducement to meritorious exertion, or the cultivation of his faculties. The indolence and carelessness of the slave, and the less productive quality of his labor, are traced to the want of such excitement. The first compensation for this disadvantage, is his security. If he can rise no higher, he is just in the same degree secured against the chances of falling lower. It has been sometimes made a question whether it were better for man to be freed from the perturbations of hope and fear, or to be exposed to their vicissitudes. But I suppose there could be little question with respect to a situation, in which the fears must greatly predominate over the hopes. And such, I apprehend, to be the condition of the laboring poor in countries where Slavery does not exist. If not exposed to present suffering, there is continual apprehension for the future—for themselves—for their children—of sickness and want, if not of actual starvation. They expect to improve their circumstances! Would

any person of ordinary candor, say that there is one in a hundred of them, who does not well know, that with all the exertion he can make, it is out of his power materially to improve his circumstances? I speak not so much of menial servants, who are generally of a superior class, as of the agricultural and manufacturing laborers. They labor with no such view. It is the instinctive struggle to preserve existence, and when the superior efficiency of their labor over that of our slaves is pointed out, as being animated by a free man's hopes, might it not well be replied—it is because they labor under a sterner compulsion. The laws interpose no obstacle to their raising their condition in society. 'Tis a great boon—but as to the great mass, they know that they never will be able to raise it—and it should seem not very important in effect, whether it be the interdict of law, or imposed by the circumstances of the society. One in a thousand is successful. But does his success compensate for the sufferings of the many who are tantalized, baffled, and tortured in vain attempts to attain a like result? If the individual be conscious of intellectual power, the suffering is greater. Even where success is apparently attained, he sometimes gains it but to die—or with all capacity to enjoy it exhausted—worn out in the struggle with fortune. If it be true that the African is an inferior variety of the human race, of less elevated character, and more limited intellect, is it not desirable that the inferior laboring class should be made up of such, who will conform to their condition without painful aspirations, and vain struggles?

The slave is certainly liable to be sold. But, perhaps, it may be questioned, whether this is a greater evil than the liability of the laborer, in fully peopled countries, to be dismissed by his employer, with the uncertainty of being able to obtain employment, or the means of subsistence elsewhere. With us, the employer cannot dismiss his laborer without providing him with another employer. His means of subsistence are secure, and this is a compensation for much. He is also liable to be separated from wife or child—though not more frequently, that I am aware of, than the exigency of their condition compels the separation of families among the laboring poor elsewhere—but from native character and temperament, the separation is much less severely felt. And it is one of the compensations, that he may sustain these relations without suffering a still severer penalty for the indulgence.

The love of liberty is a noble passion—to have the free, uncontrolled disposition of ourselves, our words and actions. But alas! it is one in which we know that a large portion of the human race can never be gratified. It is mockery, to say that the laborer any where has such disposition of himself—though there may be an approach to it in some peculiar, and those, perhaps, not the most desirable, states of society. But unless he be properly disciplined and prepared for its enjoyment, it is the most fatal boon that could be conferred—fatal to himself and others. If slaves have less freedom of action than other laborers, which I by no means admit, they are saved in a great degree from the responsibility of self-government, and the evils springing from their

own perverse wills. Those who have looked most closely into life, and know how great a portion of human misery is derived from these sources—the undecided and wavering purpose—producing ineffectual exertion, or indolence with its thousand attendant evils—the wayward conduct—intemperance or profligacy—will most appreciate this benefit. The line of a slave's duty is marked out with precision, and he has no choice but to follow it. He is saved the double difficulty, first of determining the proper course for himself, and then of summoning up the energy which will sustain him in pursuing it.

If some superior power should impose on the laborious poor of any other country—this as their unalterable condition—you shall be saved from the torturing anxiety concerning your own future support, and that of your children, which now pursues you through life, and haunts you in death—you shall be under the necessity of regular and healthful, though not excessive labor—in return, you shall have the ample supply of your natural wants—you may follow the instinct of nature in becoming parents, without apprehending that this supply will fail yourselves or your children—you shall be supported and relieved in sickness, and in old age, wear out the remains of existence among familiar scenes and accustomed associates, without being driven to beg, or to resort to the hard and miserable charity of a work house—you shall of necessity be temperate, and shall have neither the temptation nor opportunity to commit great crimes, or practice the more destructive vices—how inappreciable would the boon be thought! And is not this a very near approach to the condition of our slaves? The evils of their situation they but lightly feel, and would hardly feel at all, if they were not sedulously instructed into sensibility. Certain it is, that if their fate were at the absolute disposal of a council of the most enlightened philanthropists in christendom, with unlimited resources, they could place them in no situation so favorable to themselves, as that which they at present occupy. But whatever good there may be, or whatever mitigation of evil, it is worse than valueless, because it is the result of *Slavery*.

I am aware, that however often answered, it is likely to be repeated again and again—how can that institution be tolerable, by which a large class of society is cut off from the hope of improvement in knowledge; to whom blows are not degrading; theft no more than a fault; falsehood and the want of chastity almost venial, and in which a husband or parent looks with comparative indifference, on that which, to a freeman, would be the dishonor of a wife or child?

But why not, if it produces the greatest aggregate of good? Sin and ignorance are only evils because they lead to misery. It is not our institution, but the institution of nature, that in the progress of society a portion of it should be exposed to want, and the misery which it brings, and therefore involved in ignorance, vice, and depravity. In anticipating some of the good, we also anticipate a portion of the evil of civilization. But we have it in a mitigated form. The want and the misery are unknown; the ignorance is less a misfortune,

because the being is not the guardian of himself, and partly on account of that involuntary ignorance, the vice is less vice—less hurtful to man, and less displeasing to God.

There is something in this word *Slavery* which seems to partake of the qualities of the insane root, and distempers the minds of men. That which would be true in relation to one predicament, they misapply to another, to which it has no application at all. Some of the virtues of a freeman would be the vices of slaves. To submit to a blow, would be degrading to a freeman, because he is the protector of himself. It is not degrading to a slave—neither is it to a priest or a woman. And is it a misfortune that it should be so? The freeman of other countries is compelled to submit to indignities hardly more endurable than blows—indignities to make the sensitive feelings shrink, and the proud heart swell; and this very name of freeman, gives them double rancour. If when a man is born in Europe, it were certainly foreseen that he was destined to a life of painful labor—to obscurity, contempt and privation—would it not be mercy that he should be reared in ignorance and apathy, and trained to the endurance of the evils he must encounter? It is not certainly foreseen as to any individual, but it is foreseen as to the great mass of those born of the laboring poor; and it is for the mass, not for the exception, that the institutions of society are to provide. Is it not better that the character and intellect of the individual should be suited to the station which he is to occupy? Would you do a benefit to the horse or the ox, by giving him a cultivated understanding or fine feelings? So far as the mere laborer has the pride, the knowledge, or the aspirations of a freeman, he is unfitted for his situation, and must doubly feel its infelicity. If there are sordid, servile, and laborious offices to be performed, is it not better that there should be sordid, servile, and laborious beings to perform them? If there were infallible marks by which individuals of inferior intellect, and inferior character, could be selected at their birth—would not the interests of society be served, and would not some sort of fitness seem to require, that they should be selected for the inferior and servile offices? And if this race be generally marked by such inferiority, is it not fit that they should fill them?

I am well aware that those whose aspirations are after a state of society from which evil shall be banished, and who look in life for that which life will never afford, contemplate that all the offices of life may be performed without contempt or degradation—all be regarded as equally liberal, or equally respected. But theorists cannot control nature and bend her to their views, and the inequality of which I have before spoken is deeply founded in nature. The offices which employ knowledge and intellect, will always be regarded as more liberal than those which only require the labor of the hands. When there is competition for employment, he who gives it bestows a favor, and it will be so received. He will assume superiority from the power of dismissing his laborers, and from fear of this, the latter will practise deference, often amounting to servility. Such in time will become the

established relation between the employer and the employed, the rich and the poor. If want be accompanied with sordidness and squalor, though it be pitied, the pity will be mixed with some degree of contempt. If it lead to misery, and misery to vice, there will be disgust and aversion.

What is the essential character of *Slavery*, and in what does it differ from the *serritude* of other countries? If I should venture on a definition, I should say that where a man is compelled to labor at the will of another, and to give him much the greater portion of the product of his labor, there *Slavery* exists; and it is immaterial by what sort of compulsion the will of the laborer is subdued. It is what no human being would do without some sort of compulsion. He cannot be compelled to labor by blows. No—but what difference does it make, if you can inflict any other sort of torture which will be equally effectual in subduing the will? if you can starve him, or alarm him for the subsistence of himself or his family? And is it not under this compulsion that the *freeman* labors? I do not mean in every particular case, but in the general. Will any one be hardy enough to say that he is at his own disposal, or has the government of himself? True, he may change his employer if he is dissatisfied with his conduct towards him; but this is a privilege he would in the majority of cases gladly abandon, and render the connexion between them indissoluble. There is far less of the interest and attachment in his relation to his employer, which so often exists between the master and the slave, and mitigates the condition of the latter. An intelligent English traveller has characterized as the most miserable and degraded of all beings, "a masterless slave." And is not the condition of the laboring poor of other countries too often that of masterless slaves? Take the following description of a *free* laborer, no doubt highly colored, quoted by the author to whom I have before referred.

"What is that defective being, with caliless legs and stooping shoulders, weak in body and mind, inert, pusillanimous and stupid, whose premature wrinkles and furtive glance, tell of misery and degradation? That is an English peasant or pauper, for the words are synonimous. His sire was a pauper, and his mother's milk wanted nourishment. From infancy his food has been bad, as well as insufficient; and he now feels the pains of unsatisfied hunger nearly whenever he is awake. But half clothed, and never supplied with more warmth than suffices to cook his scanty meals, cold and wet come to him, and stay by him with the weather. He is married of course; for to this he would have been driven by the poor laws, even if he had been, as he never was, sufficiently comfortable and prudent to dread the burden of a family. But though instinct, and the overseer have given him a wife, he has not tasted the highest joys of husband and father. His partner and his little ones being like himself, often hungry, seldom warm, sometimes sick without aid, and always sorrowful without hope, are greedy, selfish, and vexing; so, to use his own expression, he hates the sight of them, and resorts to his hovel, only because a hedge affords less shelter from the wind and rain. Compelled by parish law to

support his family, which means to join them in consuming an allowance from the parish, he frequently conspires with his wife to get that allowance increased, or prevent its being diminished. This brings beggary, trickery and quarrelling, and ends in settled craft. Though he have the inclination, he wants the courage to become, like more energetic men of his class, a poacher or smuggler on a large scale, but he pilfers occasionally, and teaches his children to lie and steal. His subdued and slavish manner towards his great neighbors, shews that they treat him with suspicion and harshness. Consequently, he at once dreads and hates them; but he will never harm them by violent means. Too degraded to be desperate, he is only thoroughly depraved. His miserable career will be short; rheumatism and asthma are conducting him to the work house; where he will breathe his last without one pleasant recollection, and so make room for another wretch, who may live and die in the same way." And this description or some other, not much less revolting, is applied to "the bulk of the people, the great body of the people." Take the following description of the condition of childhood, which has justly been called eloquent.*

"The children of the very poor have no young times; it makes the very heart bleed, to over-hear the casual street talk between a poor woman and her little girl, a woman of the better sort of poor, in a condition rather above the squalid beings we have been contemplating. It is not of toys, of nursery books, of summer holidays (fitting that age) of the promised sight or play; of praised sufficiency at school. It is of mangling and clear starching; of the price of coals, or of potatoes. The questions of the child, that should be the very outpourings of curiosity in idleness, are marked with forecast and melancholy providence. It has come to be a woman, before it was a child. It has learnt to go to market; it chaffers, it haggles, it envies, it murmers; it is knowing, acute, sharpened; it never prattles." Imagine such a description applied to the children of negro slaves, the most vacant of human beings, whose life is a holiday.

And this people, to whom these horrors are familiar, are those who fill the world with clamor, concerning the injustice and cruelty of slavery. I speak in no invidious spirit. Neither the laws nor the government of England are to be reproached with the evils which are inseparable from the state of their society—as little, undoubtedly, are we to be reproached with the existence of our Slavery. Including the whole of the United States—and for reasons already given, the whole ought to be included, as receiving in no unequal degree the benefit—may we not say justly that we have less Slavery, and more mitigated Slavery, than any other country in the civilized world?

That they are called free, undoubtedly aggravates the sufferings of the slaves of other regions. They see the enormous inequality which exists, and feel their own misery, and can hardly conceive otherwise, than that there is some injustice in the institutions of society to occasion these. They regard the apparently more fortunate class as op-

* Essays of Elia.

pressors, and it adds bitterness, that they should be of the same name and race. They feel indignity more acutely, and more of discontent and evil passion is excited; they feel that it is mockery that calls them free. Men do not so much hate and envy those who are separated from them by a wide distance, and some apparently impassible barrier, as those who approach nearer to their own condition, and with whom they habitually bring themselves into comparison. The slave with us is not tantalized with the name of freedom, to which his whole condition gives the lie, and would do so if he were emancipated to-morrow. The African slave sees that nature herself has marked him as a seperate—and if left to himself, I have no doubt he would feel it to be an inferior—race, and interposed a barrier almost insuperable to his becoming a member of the same society, standing on the same footing of right and privilege with his master.

That the African negro is an inferior variety of the human race, is, I think, now generally admitted, and his distinguishing characteristics are such as peculiarly mark him out for the situation which he occupies among us. And these are no less marked in their original country, than as we have daily occasion to observe them. The most remarkable is their indifference to personal liberty. In this they have followed their instincts since we have any knowledge of their continent, by enslaving each other; but contrary to the experience of every other race, the possession of slaves has no material effect in raising the character, and promoting the civilization of the master. Another trait is the want of domestic affections, and insensibility to the ties of kindred. In the travels of the Landers, after speaking of a single exception, in the person of a woman who betrayed some transient emotion in passing by the country from which she had been torn as a slave, the authors add: "that Africans, generally speaking, betray the most perfect indifference on losing their liberty, and being deprived of their relatives, while love of country is equally a stranger to their breasts, as social tenderness or domestic affection." "Marriage is celebrated by the nations as unconcernedly as possible; a man thinks as little of taking a wife, as of cutting an ear of corn—affection is altogether out of the question." They are, however, very submissive to authority, and seem to entertain great reverence for chiefs, priests, and masters. No greater indignity can be offered an individual, than to throw approbrium on his parents. On this point of their character, I think I have remarked, that, contrary to the instinct of nature in other races, they entertain less regard for children than for parents, to whose authority they have been accustomed to submit. Their character is thus summed up by the travellers quoted, "the few opportunities we have had of studying their characters, induce us to believe that they are a simple, honest, inoffensive, but weak, timid, and cowardly race. They seem to have no social tenderness, very few of those amiable private virtues which could win our affections, and none of those public qualities that claim respect or command admiration. The love of country is not strong enough in their bosoms to incite them to defend it against a despicable foe; and of the active

energy, noble sentiments, and contempt of danger which distinguishes the North American tribes and other savages, no traces are to be found among this slothful people. Regardless of the past, as reckless of the future, the present alone influences their actions. In this respect, they approach nearer to the nature of the brute creation, than perhaps any other people on the face of the globe." Let me ask if this people do not furnish the very material out of which slaves ought to be made, and whether it be not an improving of their condition to make them the slaves of civilized masters. There is a variety in the character of the tribes. Some are brutally, and savagely ferocious and bloody, whom it would be mercy to enslave. From the travellers' account, it seems not unlikely that the negro race is tending to extermination, being daily encroached on, and overrun by the superior Arab race. It may be, that when they shall have been lost from their native seats, they may be found numerous, and in no unhappy condition, on the continent to which they have been transplanted.

The opinion which connects form and features with character and intellectual power, is one so deeply impressed on the human mind, that perhaps there is scarcely any man who does not almost daily act upon it, and in some measure verify its truth. Yet in spite of this intimation of nature, and though the anatomist and physiologist may tell them that the races differ in every bone and muscle, and in the proportion of brain and nerves, yet there are some, who with a most bigoted and fanatical determination to free themselves from what they have prejudged to be prejudice, will still maintain that this physiognomy, evidently tending to that of the brute when compared to that of the Caucasian race, may be enlightened by as much thought, and animated by as lofty sentiment. We who have the best opportunity of judging, are pronounced to be incompetent to do so, and to be blinded by our interest and prejudices—often by those who have no opportunity at all—and we are to be taught to distrust or disbelieve that which we daily observe, and familiarly know, on such authority. Our prejudices are spoken of. But the truth is, that, until very lately, since circumstances have compelled us to think for ourselves, we took our opinions on this subject, as on every other, ready formed from the country of our origin. And so deeply rooted were they, that we adhered to them, as most men will do to deeply rooted opinions, even against the evidence of our own observation, and our own senses. If the inferiority exists, it is attributed to the apathy and degradation produced by Slavery. Though of the hundreds of thousand scattered over other countries, where the laws impose no diability upon them, none has given evidence of an approach to even mediocrity of intellectual excellence, this too is attributed to the Slavery of a portion of their race. They are regarded as a servile caste, and degraded by opinion, and thus every generous effort is repressed. Yet though this should be the general effect, this very estimation is calculated to produce the contrary effect in particular instances. It is observed by Bacon, with respect to deformed persons and eunuchs, that though in general there is something of perversity in the character, the disad-

vantage often leads to extraordinary displays of virtue and excellence. "Whosoever hath any thing fixed in his person that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself, to rescue and deliver himself from scorn." So it would be with them, if they were capable of European aspirations—genius, if they possessed it, would be doubly fired with noble rage to rescue itself from this scorn. Of course, I do not mean to say that there may not be found among them some of superior capacity to many white persons; but that great intellectual powers are, perhaps, never found among them, and that in general their capacity is very limited, and their feelings animal and coarse—fitting them peculiarly to discharge the lower, and merely mechanical offices of society.

And why should it not be so? We have among domestic animals infinite varieties, distinguished by various degrees of sagacity, courage, strength, swiftness, and other qualities. And it may be observed, that this is no objection to their being derived from a common origin, which we suppose them to have had. Yet these accidental qualities, as they may be termed, however acquired in the first instance, we know that they transmit unimpaired to their posterity for an indefinite succession of generations. It is most important that these varieties should be preserved, and that each should be applied to the purposes for which it is best adapted. No philo-zoost, I believe, has suggested it as desirable that these varieties should be melted down into one equal, undistinguished race of curs or road horses.

Slavery, as it is said in an eloquent article published in a Southern periodical work,* to which I am indebted for other ideas, "has done more to elevate a degraded race in the scale of humanity; to tame the savage; to civilize the barbarous; to soften the ferocious; to enlighten the ignorant, and to spread the blessings of christianity among the heathen, than all the missionaries that philanthropy and religion have ever sent forth." Yet unquestionable as this is, and though human ingenuity and thought may be tasked in vain to devise any other means by which these blessings could have been conferred, yet a sort of sensibility which would be only mawkish and contemptible, if it were not mischievous, affects still to weep over the wrongs of "injured Africa." Can there be a doubt of the immense benefit which has been conferred on the race, by transplantiug them from their native, dark, and barbarous regions, to the American Continent and Islands? There, three-fourths of the race are in a state of the most deplorable personal Slavery. And those who are not, are in a scarcely less deplorable condition of political Slavery, to barbarous chiefs—who value neither life nor any other human right, or enthralled by priests to the most abject and atrocious superstitions. Take the following testimony of one of the few disinterested observers, who has had an opportunity of observing them in both situations.† "The wild savage is the child

* Southern Literary Messenger, for January, 1835. *Note to Blackstone's Commentaries.*

† Journal of an officer employed in the expedition, under the command of Capt. Owen, on the Western Coast of Africa, 1822.

of passion, unaided by one ray of religion or morality to direct his course, in consequence of which his existence is stained with every crime that can debase human nature to a level with the brute creation. Who can say that the slaves in our colonies are such? Are they not, by comparison with their still savage brethren, enlightened beings? Is not the West Indian negro, therefore, greatly indebted to his master for making him what he is—for having raised him from the state of debasement in which he was born, and placed him in a scale of civilized society? How can he repay him? He is possessed of nothing—the only return in his power is his servitude. The man who has seen the wild African, roaming in his native woods, and the well fed, happy looking negro of the West Indies, may, perhaps, be able to judge of their comparative happiness: the former I strongly suspect would be glad to change his state of boasted freedom, starvation and disease, to become the slave of sinners, and the commiseration of saints." It was a useful and benificent work, approaching the heroic, to tame the wild horse, and subdue him to the use of man; how much more to tame the nobler animal that is capable of reason, and subdue him to usefulness?

We believe that the tendency of Slavery is to elevate the character of the master. No doubt the character—especially of youth—has sometimes received a taint and premature knowledge of vice, from the contact and association with ignorant and servile beings of gross manners and morals. Yet still we believe that the entire tendency is to inspire disgust and aversion towards their peculiar vices. It was not without a knowledge of nature, that the Spartans exhibited the vices of slaves by way of negative example to their children. We flatter ourselves that the view of this degradation, mitigated as it is, has the effect of making probity more strict, the pride of character more high, the sense of honor more strong, than is commonly found where this institution does not exist. Whatever may be the prevailing faults or vices of the masters of slaves, they have not commonly been understood to be those of dishonesty, cowardice, meanness or falsehood. And so most unquestionably it ought to be. Our institutions would indeed be intolerable in the sight of God and man, if, condemning one portion of society to hopeless ignorance and comparative degradation, they should make no atonement by elevating the other class by higher virtues, and more liberal attainments—if, besides degraded slaves, there should be ignorant, ignoble, and degraded freemen. There is a broad and well marked line, beyond which no slavish vice should be regarded with the least toleration or allowance. One class is cut off from all interest in the State—that abstraction so potent to the feelings of a generous nature. The other must make compensation by increased assiduity and devotion to its honor and welfare. The love of wealth—so laudable when kept within proper limits, so base and mischievous when it exceeds them—so infectious in its example—an infection to which I fear we have been too much exposed—should be pursued by no arts in any degree equivocal, or at any risk of injustice to others. So surely as there is a just and wise governor of

the universe, who punishes the sins of nations and communities, as well as of individuals, so surely shall we suffer punishment, if we are indifferent to that moral and intellectual cultivation of which the means are furnished to us, and to which we are called and incited by our situation.

I would to heaven I could express, as I feel, the conviction how necessary this cultivation is, not only to our prosperity and consideration, but to our safety and very existence. We, the slave-holding States, are in a hopeless minority in our own confederated republic—to say nothing of the great confederacy of civilized States. It is admitted, I believe, not only by slave-holders, but by others, that we have sent to our common councils more than our due share of talent, high character and eloquence. Yet in spite of all these most strenuously exerted, measures have been sometimes adopted which we believed to be dangerous and injurious to us, and threatening to be fatal. What would be our situation, if, instead of these, we were only represented by ignorant and grovelling men, incapable of raising their views beyond a job or petty office, and incapable of commanding hearing or consideration. May I be permitted to advert—by no means invidiously—to the late contest carried on by South-Carolina against Federal authority, and so happily terminated by the moderation which prevailed in our public counsels. I have often reflected, what one circumstance, more than any other, contributed to the successful issue of a contest, apparently so hopeless, in which one weak and divided state was arrayed against the whole force of the Confederacy—unsustained, and uncountenanced, even by those who had a common interest with her. It seemed to me to be, that we had for leaders an unusual number of men of great intellectual power, co-operating cordially and in good faith, and commanding respect and confidence at home and abroad, by elevated and honorable character. It was from these that we—the followers at home—caught hope and confidence in the gloomiest aspect of our affairs. These, by their eloquence and the largeness of their views, at least shook the faith of the dominant majority in the wisdom and justice of their measures—or the practicability of carrying them into successful effect, and by their bearing and well known character, satisfied them that South-Carolina would do all that she had pledged herself to do. Without these, how different might have been the result? And who shall say what at this day would have been the aspect of the now flourishing fields and cities of South-Carolina? Or rather without these, it is probable the contest would never have been begun; but that without even the animation of a struggle, we should have sunk silently into a hopeless and degrading subjection. While I have memory—in the extremity of age—in sickness—under all the reverses and calamities of life—I shall have one source of pride and consolation—that of having been associated—according to my humbler position—with the noble spirits who stood prepared to devote themselves for Liberty—the Constitution—the Union. May such character and such talent, never be wanting to South-Carolina.

I am sure that it is unnecessary to say to an assembly like this, that the conduct of the master to his slave should be distinguished by the utmost humanity. That we should indeed regard them as wards and dependants on our kindness, for whose well being in every way we are deeply responsible. This is no less the dictate of wisdom and just policy, than of right feeling. It is wise with respect to the services to be expected from them. I have never heard of an owner whose conduct in their management was distinguished by undue severity, whose slaves were not in a great degree worthless to him. A cheerful and kindly demeanor, with the expression of interest in themselves and their affairs, is, perhaps, calculated to have a better effect on them, than what might be esteemed more substantial favors and indulgencies. Throughout nature, attachment is the reward of attachment. It is wise too in relation to the civilized world around us, to avoid giving occasion to the odium which is so industriously excited against ourselves and our institutions. For this reason, public opinion should, if possible, bear even more strongly and indignantly than it does at present, on masters who practise any wanton cruelty on their slaves. The miscreant who is guilty of this, not only violates the law of God and of humanity, but as far as in him lies, by bringing odium upon, endangers the institutions of his country, and the safety of his countrymen. He casts a shade upon the character of every individual of his fellow-citizens, and does every one of them a personal injury. So of him who indulges in any odious excess of intemperate or licentious passion. It is detached instances of this sort, of which the existence is, perhaps, hardly known among ourselves, that, collected with pertinacious and malevolent industry, affords the most formidable weapons to the mischievous zealots, who array them as being characteristic of our general manners and state of society.

I would by no means be understood to intimate, that a vigorous, as well as just government, should not be exercised over slaves. This is part of our duty towards them, no less obligatory than any other duty, and no less necessary towards their well being than to ours. I believe that at least as much injury has been done and suffering inflicted by weak and injudicious indulgence, as by inordinate severity. He whose business is to labor, should be made to labor, and that with due diligence, and should be vigorously restrained from excess or vice. This is no less necessary to his happiness than to his usefulness. The master who neglects this, not only makes his slaves unprofitable to himself, but discontented and wretched—a nuisance to his neighbors and to society.

I have said that the tendency of our institution is to elevate the female character, as well as that of the other sex, and for similar reasons. In other states of society, there is no well defined limit to seperate virtue and vice. There are degrees of vice from the most flagrant and odious, to that which scarcely incurs the censure of society. Many individuals occupy an unequivocal position; and as society becomes accustomed to this, there will be a less peremptory requirement of purity in female manners and conduct; and often the whole of the

society will be in a tainted and uncertain condition with respect to female virtue, Here, there is that certain and marked line, above which there is no toleration or allowance for any approach to license of manners or conduct, and she who falls below it, will fall far below even the slave. How many will incur this penalty?

And permit me to say that this elevation of the female character is no less important and essential to us, than the moral and intellectual cultivation of the other sex. It would indeed be intolerable, if, when one class of the society is necessarily degraded in this respect, no compensation were made by the superior elevation and purity of the other. Not only essential purity of conduct, but the utmost purity of manners, and I will add, though it may incur the formidable charge of affectation or prudery,—a greater severity of decorum than is required elsewhere, is necessary among us. Always should be strenuously resisted the attempts which have been sometimes made to introduce among us the freedom of foreign European, and especially of continental manners. This freedom, the remotest in the world from that which sometimes springs from simplicity of manners is calculated and commonly intended to confound the outward distinctions of virtue and vice. It is to prepare the way for licentiousness—to produce this effect—that if those who are clothed with the outward color and garb of vice, may be well received by society, those who are actually guilty may hope to be so too. It may be said, that there is often perfect purity where there is very great freedom of manners. And, I have no doubt, this may be true in particular instances, but it is never true of any *society* in which this is the general state of manners. What guards can there be to purity, when every thing that *may possibly* be done innocently, is habitually practised; when there can be no impropriety which is not vice. And what must be the depth of the depravity when there is a departure from that which they admit as principle. Besides, things which may perhaps be practised innocently where they are familiar, produce a moral dilaceration in the course of their being introduced where they are new. Let us say, we will not have the manners of South-Carolina changed.

I have before said that that free labor is cheaper than the labor of slaves, and so far as it is so, the condition of the free laborer is worse. But I think President Dew has sufficiently shown that this is only true of Northern countries. It is matter of familiar remark that the tendency of warm climates is to relax the human constitution and indispose to labor. The earth yields abundantly—in some regions almost spontaneously—under the influence of the sun, and the means of supporting life are obtained with but slight exertion; and men will use no greater exertion than is necessary to the purpose. This very luxuriance of vegetation, where no other cause concurs, renders the air less salubrious, and even when positive malady does not exist, the health is habitually impaired. Indolence renders the constitution more liable to these effects of the atmosphere, and these again aggravate the indolence. Nothing but the coercion of slavery can over-

come the repugnance to labor under these circumstances, and by subduing the soil, improve and render wholesome the climate.

It is worthy of remark that there does not now exist on the face of the earth, a people in a tropical climate, or one approaching to it, where slavery does not exist, that is in a state of high civilization, or exhibits the energies which mark the progress towards it. Mexico and the South American republics,* starting on their new career of independence, and having gone through a farce of abolishing slavery, are rapidly degenerating, even from semi-barbarism. The only portion of the South American continent which seems to be making any favorable progress, in spite of a rich and arbitrary civil government, is Brazil, in which slavery has been retained. Cuba, of the same race with the continental republics, is daily and rapidly advancing in industry and civilization; and this is owing exclusively to her slaves. St. Domingo is struck out of the map of civilized existence, and the British West Indies will shortly be so. On the other continent, Spain and Portugal are degenerate, and their rapid progress is downward. Their southern coast is infested by disease, arising from causes which industry might readily overcome, but that industry they will never exert. Greece is still barbarous and scantily peopled. The work of an English physician distinguished by strong sense and power of observation,† gives a most affecting picture of the condition of Italy,—especially south of the Appenines. With the decay of industry, the climate has degenerated towards the condition from which it was first rescued by the labor of slaves. There is poison in every man's veins, affecting the very springs of life, dulling or extinguishing, with the energies of the body, all energy of mind, and often exhibiting itself in the most appalling forms of disease. From year to year the pestilential atmosphere creeps forward, narrowing the circles within which it is possible to sustain human life. With disease and misery, industry still more rapidly decays, and if the process goes on, it seems

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* The author of England and America thus speaks of the Colombian republic: "During some years, this colony has been an independent state; but the people dispersed over this vast and fertile plains, have almost ceased to cultivate the good land at their disposal; they subsist principally, many of them entirely on the flesh of wild cattle; they have lost most of the arts of civilized life; not a few of them are in a state of deplorable misery; and if they should continue, as it seems probable they will, to retrograde as at present, the beautiful pampas of Buenos Ayres will soon be fit for another experiment in colonization. Slaves, black or yellow, would have cultivated those plains, would have kept together, would have been made to assist each other; would, by keeping together and assisting each other, have raised a surplus produce exchangeable in distant markets; would have kept their masters together for the sake of markets; would, by combination of labor, have preserved among their masters the arts and habits of civilized life." Yet this writer, the whole practical effect of whose work, whatever he may have thought or intended, is to show the absolute necessity, and immense benefits of slavery, finds it necessary to add, I suppose, in deference to the general sentiment of his countrymen, "that slavery might have done all this, seems not more plain, than that so much good would have been bought too dear, if its price had been slavery." Well may we say that the word makes men mad.

† Johnson on Change of Air.

that Italy too will soon be ready for another experiment in colonization.

Yet once it was not so, when Italy was possessed by the masters of slaves; when Rome contained her millions, and Italy was a garden; when their iron energies of body corresponded with the energies of mind which made them conquerors in every climate and on every soil; rolled the tide of conquest, not as in later times, from the South to the North; extended their laws and their civilization, and created them Lords of the earth.

> "What conflux issuing forth or entering in;
> Prætors, pro-consuls to their provinces,
> Hasting, or on return in robes of state.
> Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
> Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings:
> Or embassies from regions far remote,
> In various habits, on the Appian road,
> Or on th' Emilian; some from farthest South,
> Syene, and where the shadow both way falls,
> Meroe, Nilotic isle, and more to West,
> The realms of Bocchus to the Blackmoor sea:
> From th' Asian kings, and Parthian among these;
> From India and the golden Chersonese,
> And utmost Indus isle, Taprobona,
> Dusk faces, with white silken turbans wreathed;
> From Gallia, Gades and the British West;
> Germans, and Scythians, and Sarmatians, North
> Beyond Danubius to the Taurie Pool!
> All nations now to Rome obedience pay."

Such was and such is the picture of Italy. Greece presents a contrast not less striking. What is the cause of the great change? Many causes, no doubt, have occurred; but though

> "War, famine, pestilence and flood and fire
> Have dealt upon the seven-hilled city's pride,"

I will venture to say that nothing has dealt upon it more heavily than the loss of domestic slavery. Is not this evident? If they had slaves, with an energetic civil government, would the deadly miasma be permitted to overspread the Campagna and invade Rome herself? Would not the soil be cultivated, and the wastes reclaimed? A late traveller* mentions a canal, cut for miles through rock and mountain, for the purpose of carrying off the waters of the lake of Celano, on which thirty thousand Roman slaves were employed for eleven years, and which remains almost perfect to the present day. This, the government of Naples was ten years in repairing with an hundred workmen. The imperishable works of Rome which remain to the present day were for the most part executed by slaves. How different would be the condition of Naples, if for her wretched lazzaroni were substituted negro slaves, employed in rendering productive the plains whose fertility now serves only to infect the air!

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* Eight days in the Abruzzi.—*Blackwood's Magazine, November*, 1835.

To us, on whom this institution is fastened, and who could not shake it off, even if we desired to do so, the great republics of antiquity offer instruction of inestimable value. They teach us that slavery is compatible with the freedom, stability and long duration of civil government, with denseness of population, great power, and the highest civilization. And in what respect does this modern Europe, which claims to give opinions to the world, so far excel them—notwithstanding the immense advantages of the christian religion and the discovery of the art of printing? They are not more free, nor have performed more glorious actions, nor displayed more exalted virtue. In the higher departments of intellect—in all that relates to taste and imagination—they will hardly venture to claim equality. Where they have gone beyond them in the results of mechanical philosophy, or discoveries which contribute to the wants and enjoyments of physical life, they have done so by the help of means with which they were furnished by the Grecian mind—the mother of civilization—and only pursued a little further the tract which that had always pointed out. In the development of intellectual power, they will hardly bear comparison. Those noble republics in the pride of their strength and greatness, may have anticipated for themselves—as some of their poets did for them, an everlasting duration and predominance. But they could not have anticipated, that when they had fallen under barbarous arms, that when arts and civilization were lost, and the whole earth in darkness—the first light should break from their tombs—that in a renewed world, unconnected with them by ties of locality, language or descent, they should still be held the models of all that is profound in science, or elegant in literature, or all that is great in character, or elevated in imagination. And perhaps when England herself, who now leads the war with which we are on all sides threatened, shall have fulfilled her mission, and like the other glorious things of the earth, shall have passed away; when she shall have diffused her noble race and noble language, her laws, her literature and her civilization, over all quarters of the earth, and shall perhaps be overrun by some Northern horde—sunk into an ignoble and anarchical democracy,* or subdued to the dominion of some Cæsar,—demagogue and despot,—there, in Southern regions, there may be found many republics, triumphing in Grecian arts and civilization, and worthy of British descent and Roman institutions.

If after a time, when the mind and almost the memory of the republic were lost, Romans degenerated, they furnish conclusive evidence that this was owing not to their domestic, but to their political slavery. The same thing is observed over all the eastern monarchies; and so it must be, wherever property is insecure, and it is dangerous for a man to raise himself to such eminence by intellectual or moral excellence, as would give him influence over his society. So it is in Egypt; and the other regions bordering the Mediterranean which once comprehended the civilization of the world, where Carthage,

* I do not use the word democracy in the Athenian sense, but to describe the government in which the slave and his master have an equal voice in public affairs.

Tyre and Phœnecia flourished. In short, the uncontradicted experience of the world is, that in Southern States where good government and predial and domestic slavery are found, there are prosperity and greatness; where either of these conditions is wanting, degeneracy and barbarism. The former however is equally essential in all climates and under all institutions. And can we suppose it to be the design of the creator, that these regions, constituting half of the earth's surface, and the more fertile half and more capable of sustaining life, should be abandoned forever to depopulation and barbarism? Certain it is that they will never be reclaimed by the labour of freemen. In our own country, look at the lower valley of the Mississippi, which is capable of being made a far greater Egypt. In our own state, there are extensive tracts of the most fertile soil, which are capable of being made to swarm with life. These are at present pestilential swamps, and valueless, because there is abundance of other fertile soil in more favorable situations, which demand all and more than all the labour which our country can supply. Are these regions of fertility to be abandoned at once and forever to the alligator and tortoise—with here and there perhaps a miserable, shivering, crouching *free* black savage? Does not the finger of heaven itself seem to point to a race of men—not to be enslaved by us but already enslaved, and who will be in every way benefitted by the change of masters—to whom such climate is not uncongenial, who though disposed to indolence are yet patient and capable of labor, on whose whole features, mind and character, nature has indelibly written—slave;—and indicate that we should avail ourselves of these in fulfilling the first great command to subdue and replenish the earth.

It is true that this labor will be dearer than that of northern countries, where under the name of freedom, they obtain cheaper and perhaps better slaves. Yet it is the best we can have, and this too has its compensation. We see it compensated at present by the superior value of our agricultural products. And this superior value they must probably always have. The Southern climate admits of a greater variety of productions. Whatever is produced in Northern climates, the same thing, or something equivalent, may be produced in the Southern. But the Northern have no equivalent for the products of Southern climates. The consequence will be, that the products of Southern regions will be demanded all over the civilized world. The agricultural products of Northern regions are chiefly for their own consumption. They must therefore apply themselves to the manufacturing of articles of luxury, elegance, convenience or necessity,—which requires cheap labor—for the purpose of exchanging them with their Southern neighbors. Thus nature herself indicates that agriculture should be the predominating employment in Southern countries, and manufactures in Northern. Commerce is necessary to both—but less indispensable to the Southern, which produce within themselves a greater variety of things desirable to life. They will therefore have somewhat less of the commercial spirit. We must avail ourselves of such labor as we can command. The slave must labour and is inured to it; while the necessity of energy in his

government, of watchfulness, and of preparation and power to suppress insurrection, added to the moral force derived from the habit of command, may help to prevent the degeneracy of the master.

The task of keeping down insurrection is commonly supposed, by those who are strangers to our institutions, to be a very formidable one. Even among ourselves; accustomed as we have been to take our opinions on this as on every other subject, ready formed from those whom we regarded as instructors, in the teeth of our own observation and experience, fears have been entertained which are absolutely ludicrous. We have been supposed to be nightly reposing over a mine, which may at any instant explode to our destruction. The first thought of a foreigner sojourning in one of our cities, who is awakened by any nightly alarm, is of servile insurrection and massacre. Yet if any thing is certain in human affairs, it is certain and from the most obvious considerations, that we are more secure in this respect than any civilized and fully peopled society upon the face of the earth. In every such society, there is a much larger proportion than with us, of persons who have more to gain than to lose by the overthrow of government, and the embroiling of social order. It is in such a state of things that those who were before at the bottom of society, rise to the surface. From causes already considered, they are peculiarly apt to consider their sufferings the result of injustice and misgovernment, and to be rancorous and embittered accordingly. They have every excitement therefore of resentful passion, and every temptation which the hope of increased opulence, or power or consideration can hold out, to urge them to innovation and revolt. Supposing the same disposition to exist in equal degree among our slaves, what are their comparative means or prospect of gratifying it? The poor of other countries are called free. They have, at least, no one interested to exercise a daily and nightly superintendence and control over their conduct and actions. Emissaries of their class may traverse, unchecked, every portion of the country, for the purpose of organizing insurrection. From their greater intelligence, they have greater means of communicating with each other. They may procure and secrete arms. It is not alone the ignorant, or those who are commonly called the poor, that will be tempted to revolution. There will be many disappointed men and men of desperate fortune—men perhaps of talent and daring—to combine them and direct their energies. Even those in the higher ranks of society who contemplate no such result, will contribute to it, by declaiming on their hardships and rights.

With us, it is almost physically impossible, that there should be any very extensive combination among the slaves. It is absolutely impossible that they should procure and conceal efficient arms. Their emissaries traversing the country, would carry their commission on their foreheads. If we suppose among them an individual of sufficient talent and energy to qualify him for a revolutionary leader, he could not be so extensively known as to command the confidence, which would be necessary to enable him to combine and direct them. Of the class of freemen, there would be no individual so poor or degraded (with

the exception perhaps of here and there a reckless and desperate outlaw and felon) who would not have much to lose by the success of such an attempt; every one therefore would be vigilant and active to detect and suppress it. Of all impossible things, one of the most impossible would be a successful insurrection of our slaves, originating with themselves.

Attempts at insurrection have indeed been made—excited, as we believe, by the agitation of the abolitionists and declaimers on slavery; but these have been in every instance promptly suppressed. We fear not to compare the riots, disorder, revolt and bloodshed which have been committed in our own, with those of any other civilized communities, during the same lapse of time. And let it be observed under what extraordinary circumstances our peace has been preserved. For the last half century, one half of our population has been admonished in terms the most calculated to madden and excite, that they are the victims of the most grinding and cruel injustice and oppression. We know that these exhortations continually reach them, through a thousand channels which we cannot detect, as if carried by the birds of the air—and what human being, especially when unfavorably distinguished by outward circumstances, is not ready to give credit when he is told that he is the victim of injustice and oppression? In effect, if not in terms, they have been continually exhorted to insurrection. The master has been painted a criminal, tyrant and robber, justly obnoxious to the vengeance of God and man, and they have been assured of the countenance and sympathy, if not of the active assistance of all the rest of the world. We ourselves have in some measure pleaded guilty to the impeachment. It is not long since a great majority of our free population, servile to the opinions of those whose opinions they had been accustomed to follow, would have admitted slavery to be a great evil, unjust and indefensible in principle, and only to be vindicated by the stern necessity which was imposed upon us. Thus stimulated by every motive and passion which ordinarily actuate human beings—not as to a criminal enterprize, but as to something generous and heroic—what has been the result? A few imbecile and uncombined plots—in every instance detected before they broke out into action, and which perhaps if undetected would never have broken into action. One or two sudden, unpremeditated attempts, frantic in their character, if not prompted by actual insanity, and these instantly crushed. As it is, we are not less assured of safety, order and internal peace than any other people; and but for the pertinacious and fanatical agitation of the subject, would be much more so.

This experience of security however should admonish us of the folly and wickedness of those who have sometimes taken upon themselves to supersede the regular course of law, and by rash and violent acts to punish supposed disturbers of the peace of society. This can admit of no justification or palliation whatever. Burke I think somewhere remarks something to this effect,—that when society is in the last stage of depravity—when all parties are alike corrupt and alike

wicked and unjustifiable in their measures and objects, a good man may content himself with standing neuter, a sad and disheartened spectator of the conflict between the rival vices. But are we in this wretched condition? It is fearful to see with what avidity the worst and most dangerous characters of society seize on the occasion of obtaining the countenance of better men, for the purpose of throwing off the restraints of law. It is always these who are most zealous and forward in constituting themselves the protectors of the public peace. To such men—men without reputation or principle or stake in society—disorder is the natural element. In that, desperate fortunes and the want of all moral principle and moral feeling constitute power. They are eager to avenge themselves upon society. Anarchy is not so much the absence of government as the government of the worst—not aristocracy but kakistocracy—a state of things, which to the honor of our nature, has seldom obtained amongst men, and which perhaps was only fully exemplified during the worst times of the French revolution, when that horrid hell burnt with its most horrid flame. In such a state of things, to be accused is to be condemned—to protect the innocent is to be guilty; and what perhaps is the worst effect, even men of better nature, to whom their own deeds are abhorrent, are goaded by terror to be forward and emulous in deeds of guilt and violence. The scenes of lawless violence which have been acted in some portions of our country, rare and restricted as they have been, have done more to tarnish its reputation than a thousand libels. They have done more to discredit, and if any thing could, to endanger, not only our domestic, but our republican institutions, than the abolitionists themselves. Men can never be permanently and effectually disgraced but by themselves, and rarely endangered but by their own injudicious conduct, giving advantage to the enemy. Better, far better, would it be to encounter the dangers with which we are supposed to be threatened, than to employ such means for averting them. But the truth is, that in relation to this matter, so far as respects actual insurrection, when alarm is once excited, danger is absolutely at an end. Society can then employ legitimate and severe effectual measures for its own protection. The very commission of such deeds, is proof that they are necessary. Let those who attempt them then, or make any demonstration towards them, understand that they will meet only the discountenance and abhorrence of all good men, and the just punishment of the laws they have dared to outrage.

It has commonly been supposed, that this institution will prove a source of weakness in relation to military defence against a foreign enemy. I will venture to say that in a slave holding community, a larger military force may be maintained permanently in the field, than in any State where there are not slaves. It is plain that almost the whole of the able bodied free male population, making half of the entire able bodied male population, may be maintained in the field, and this without taking in any material degree from the labour and resources of the country. In general the labor of our country is performed by slaves. In other countries, it is their laborers that form

the material of their armies. What proportion of these can be taken away without fatally crippling their industry and resources? In the war of the revolution, though the strength of our state was wasted and paralyzed by the unfortunate divisions which existed among ourselves, yet it may be said with general truth, that every citizen was in the field and acquired much of the qualities of the soldier.

It is true that this advantage will be attended with its compensating evils and disadvantages; to which we must learn to submit, if we are determined on the maintenance of our institutions. We are, as yet, hardly at all aware how little the maxims and practices of modern civilized governments will apply to us. Standing armies, as they are elsewhere constituted, we cannot have; for we have not, and for generations cannot have the materials out of which they are to be formed. If we should be involved in serious wars, I have no doubt but that some sort of conscription, requiring the services of all citizens for a considerable term, will be necessary. Like the people of Athens, it will be necessary that every citizen should be a soldier, and qualified to discharge efficiently the duties of a soldier. It may seem a melancholy consideration, that an army so made up should be opposed to the disciplined mercenaries of foreign nations. But we must learn to know our true situation. But may we not hope, that made up of superior materials, of men having home and country to defend; inspired by higher pride of character, of greater intelligence and trained by an effective, though honorable discipline, such an army will be more than a match for mercenaries. The efficiency of an army is determined by the qualities of its officers, and may we not expect to have a greater proportion of men better qualified for officers, and possessing the true spirit of military command. And let it be recollected that if there were otherwise reason to apprehend danger from insurrection, there will be the greatest security when there is the largest force on foot within the country. Then it is that any such attempt would be most instantly and effectually crushed.

And perhaps a wise foresight should induce our State to provide, that it should have within itself such military knowledge and skill as may be sufficient to organize, discipline and command armies, by establishing a military academy or school of discipline. The school of the militia will not do for this. From the general opinion of our weakness, if our country should at any time come into hostile collision, we shall be selected for the point of attack; making us, according to Mr. Adams' anticipation, the Flanders of the United States. Come from what quarter it may, the storm will fall upon us. It is known that lately when there was apprehension of hostility with France, the scheme was instantly devised of invading the Southern States and organizing insurrection. In a popular English periodical work, I have seen the plan suggested by an officer of high rank and reputation in the British army, of invading the Southern States at various points and operating by the same means. He is said to be a gallant officer, and certainly had no conception that he was devising atrocious crime, as alien to the true spirit of civilized warfare, as the

poisoning of streams and fountains. But the folly of such schemes is no less evident than their wickedness. Apart from the consideration of that which experience has most fully proved to be true—that in general their attachment and fidelity to their masters is not to be shaken, and that from sympathy with the feelings of those by whom they are surrounded, and from whom they derive their impressions, they contract no less terror and aversion towards an invading enemy; it is manifest that this recourse would be an hundred fold more available to us than to such an enemy. They are already in our possession, and we might at will arm and organize them in any number that we might think proper. The Helots were a regular constituent part of the Spartan armies. Thoroughly acquainted with their characters and accustomed to command them, we might use any strictness of discipline which would be necessary to render them effective, and from their habits of subordination already formed, this would be a task of less difficulty. Though morally most timid, they are by no means wanting in physical strength of nerve. They are excitable by praise; and directed by those in whom they have confidence, would rush fearlessly and unquestioning upon any sort of danger. With white officers and accompanied by a strong white cavalry, there are no troops in the world from whom there would be so little reason to apprehend insubordination or mutiny.

This I admit might be a dangerous resource, and one not to be resorted to but in great extremity. But I am supposing the case of our being driven to extremity. It might be dangerous to disband such an army, and reduce them with the habits of soldiers, to their former condition of laborers. It might be found necessary, when once embodied to keep them so, and subject to military discipline—a permanent standing army. This in time of peace would be expensive, if not dangerous. Or if at any time we should be engaged in hostilities with our neighbors, and it were thought advisable to send such an army abroad to conquer settlements for themselves, the invaded regions might have occasion to think that the scourge of God was again let loose to afflict the earth.

President Dew has very fully shown how utterly vain are the fears of those, who though there may be no danger for the present, yet apprehend great danger for the future, when the number of slaves shall be greatly increased. He has shown that the large and more condensed the society becomes, the easier it will be to maintain subordination, supposing the relative numbers of the different classes to remain the same—or even if there should be a very disproportionate increase of the enslaved class. Of all vain things, the vainest and that in which man most shows his impotence and folly, is the taking upon himself to provide for a very distant future—at all events by any material sacrifice of the present. Though experience has shown that revolutions and political movements—unless when they have been conducted with the most guarded caution and moderation—have generally terminated in results just the opposite of what was expected from them, the angry ape will still play his fantastic tricks, and put in

motion machinery, the action of which he no more comprehends or foresees than he comprehends the mysteries of infinity. The insect that is borne upon the current, will fancy that he directs its course. Besides the fear of insurrection and servile war, there is also alarm lest when their numbers shall be greatly increased, their labor will become utterly unprofitable, so that it will be equally difficult for the master to retain and support them, or to get rid of them. But at what age of the world is this likely to happen? At present, it may be said that almost the whole of the Southern portion of this continent is to be subdued to cultivation; and in the order of providence, this is the task allotted to them. For this purpose, more labour will be required for generations to come than they will be able to supply. When that task is accomplished, there will he many objects to which their labour may be directed.

At present they are employed in accumulating individu l wealth, and this in one way, to wit, as agricultural labourers—and this is perhaps the most useful purpose to which their labour can be applied. The effect of slavery has not been to counteract the tendency to dispersion, which seems epidemical among our countrymen, invited by the unbounded extent of fertile and unexhausted soil, though it counteracts many of the evils of dispersion. All the customary trades, professions and employments, except the agricultural, require a condensed population for their profitable exercise. The agriculturist who can command no labor but that of his own hands or that of his family, must remain comparatively poor and rude. He who acquires wealth by the labor of slaves, has the means of improvement for himself and his children. He may have a more extended intercourse, and consequently means of information and refinement, and may seek education for his children where it may be found. I say, what is obviously true, that he has the *means* of obtaining those advantages; but I say nothing to palliate or excuse the conduct of him, who having such means neglects to avail himself of them.

I believe it to be true, that in consequence of our dispersion, though individual wealth is acquired, the face of the country is less adorned and improved by useful and ornamental public works, than in other societies of more condensed population, where there is less wealth. But this is an effect of that, which constitutes perhaps our most conspicuous advantage. Where population is condensed, they must have the evils of condensed population, and among these is the difficulty of finding profitable employment for capital He who has accumulated even an inconsiderable sum, is often puzzled to know what use to make of it. Ingenuity is therefore tasked to cast about for every enterprise which may afford a chance of profitable investment. Works useful and ornamental to the country, are thus undertaken and accomplished, and though the proprietors may fail of profit, the community no less receives the benefit. Among us, there is no such difficulty. A safe and profitable method of investment is offered to every one who has capital to dispose of, which is further recommended to his feelings by the sense of independence and the comparative leisure.

which the employment affords to the proprietor engaged in it. It is for this reason that few of our citizens engage in the pursuits of commerce. Though these may be more profitable, they are also more hazardous and more laborious.

When the demand for agricultural labour shall be fully supplied, then of course the labour of slaves will be directed to other employments and enterprises. Already it begins to be found, that in some instances it may be used as profitably in works of public improvement. As it becomes cheaper and cheaper, it will be applied to more various purposes and combined in larger masses. It may be commanded and combined with more facility than any other sort of labour; and the labourer, kept in stricter subordination, will be less dangerous to the security of society than in any other country, which is crowded and overstocked with a class of what are called free laborers. Let it be remembered that all the great and enduring monuments of human art and industry—the wonders of Egypt—the everlasting works of Rome—were created by the labor of slaves. There will come a stage in our progress when we shall have facilities for executing works as great as any of these—more useful than the pyramids—not less magnificent than the Mœotic sea. What the end of all is to be; what mutations lie hid in the womb of the distant future; to what convulsions our societies may be exposed—whether the master, finding it impossible to live with his slaves, may not be compelled to abandon the country to them—of all this it were presumptuous and vain to speculate.

I have hitherto, as I proposed, considered it as a naked, abstract question of the comparative good and evil of the institution of slavery. Very far different indeed is the practical question presented to us, when it is proposed to get rid of an institution which has interwoven itself with every fibre of the body politic; which has formed the habits of our society, and is consecrated by the usage of generations. If this be not a vicious prescription, which the laws of God forbid to ripen into right, it has a just claim to be respected by all tribunals of man. If the negroes were now free and it were proposed to enslave them, then it would be incumbent on those who proposed the measure to show clearly that their liberty was incompatible with the public security. When it is proposed to innovate on the established state of things, the burden is on those who propose the innovation, to show that advantage will be gained from it. There is no reform, however necessary, wholesome or moderate, which will not be accompanied with some degree of inconvenience, risque or suffering. Those who acquiesce in the state of things which they found existing, can hardly be thought criminal. But most deeply criminal are they who give rise to the enormous evil with which great revolutions in society are always attended, without the fullest assurance of the greater good to be ultimately obtained. But if it can be made to appear, even probably, that no good will be obtained, but that the results will be evil and calamitous as the process, what can justify such innovations? No human being can be so mischievous—if acting con-

sciously, none can be so wicked, as those who finding evil in existing institutions, rush blindly upon change, unforeseeing and reckless of consequences, and leaving it to chance or fate to determine whether the end shall be improvement, or greater and more intolerable evil. Certainly the instincts of nature prompt to resist intolerable oppression For this resistance no rule can be prescribed, but it must be left to the instincts of nature. To justify it however, the insurrectionists should at least have a reasonable probability of success, and be assured that their condition will be improved by success. But most extraordinary is it, when those who complain and clamor, are not those who are supposed to feel the oppression, but persons at a distance from them, and who can hardly at all appreciate the good or evil of their situation. It is the unalterable condition of humanity, that men must achieve civil liberty for themselves. The assistance of allies has sometimes enabled nations to repel the attacks of foreign power; never to conquer liberty as against their own internal government.

In one thing I concur with the abolitionists; that if emancipation is to be brought about, it is better that it should be immediate and total. But let us suppose it to be brought about in any manner, and then enquire what would be the effects.

The first and most obvious effect, would be to put an end to the cultivation of our great southern staple. And this would be equally the result, if we suppose the emancipated negroes to be in no way distinguished from the free laborers of other countries, and that their labour would be equally effective. In that case, they would soon cease to be laborers for hire, but would scatter themselves over our unbounded territory, to become independent land owners themselves. The cultivation of the soil on an extensive scale, can only be carried on where there are slaves, or in countries superabounding with free labour. No such operations are carried on in any portions of our own country where there are not slaves Such are carried on in England, where there is an overflowing population and intense competition for employment. And our institutions seem suited to the exigences of our respective situations. There, a much greater number of labourers is required at one season of the year than at another, and the Farmer may enlarge or diminish the quantity of labour he employs, as circumstances may require. Here, about the same quantity of labour is required at every season, and the planter suffers no inconvenience from retaining his labourers throughout the year. Imagine an extensive rice or cotton plantation cultivated by free laborers, who might perhaps *strike* for an increase of wages, at a season when the neglect of a few days would insure the destruction of the whole crop. Even if it were possible to procure laborers at all, what planter would venture to carry on his operations under such circumstances? I need hardly say that these staples cannot be produced to any extent where the proprietor of the soil cultivates it with his own hands. He can do little more than produce the necessary food for himself and his family.

And what would be the effect of putting an end to the cultivation of these staples, and thus annihilating at a blow, two thirds or three fourths of our foreign commerce? Can any sane mind contemplate such a result without terror? I speak not of the utter poverty and misery to which we ourselves would be reduced, and the desolation which would overspread our own portion of the country. Our slavery has not only given existence to millions of slaves within our own territories, it has given the means of subsistence and therefore existence to millions of freemen in our confederate States; enabling them to send forth their swarms, to overspread the plains and forests of the West and appear as the harbingers of civilization. The products of the industry of those States are in general similar to those of the civilized world, and are little demanded in their markets. By exchanging them for ours, which are every where sought for, the people of these States are enabled to acquire all the products of art and industry, all that contributes to convenience or luxury, or gratifies the taste or the intellect, which the rest of the world can supply. Not only on our own continent, but on the other, it has given existence to hundreds of thousands, and the means of comfortable subsistence to millions. A distinguished citizen of our own state, than whom none can be better qualified to form an opinion, has lately stated that our great staple, cotton, has contributed more than any thing else of later times to the progress of civilization. By enabling the poor to obtain cheap and becoming clothing, it has inspired a taste for comfort, the first stimulus to civilization. Does not *self defence* then demand of us, steadily to resist the abrogation of that which is productive of so much good? It is more than self defence. It is to defend millions of human beings, who are far removed from us, from the intensest suffering, if not from being struck out of existence. It is the defence of human civilization.

But this is but a small part of the evil which would be occasioned. After President Dew, it is unnecessary to say a single word on the practicability of colonizing our slaves. The two races, so widely seperated from each other by the impress of nature, must remain together in the same country. Whether it be accounted the result of prejudice or reason, it is certain that the two races will not be blended together so as to form a homogenous population. To one who knows any thing of the nature of man and human society, it would be unnecessary to argue that this state of things can not continue; but that one race must be driven out by the other, or exterminated, or again enslaved. I have argued on the supposition that the emancipated negroes would be as efficient as other free laborers But whatever theorists, who know nothing of the matter, may think proper to assume, we well know that this would not be so. We know that nothing but the coercion of slavery can overcome their propensity to indolence, and that not one in ten would be an efficient laborer. Even if this disposition were not grounded in their nature, it would be a result of their position. I have somewhere seen it observed, that to be degraded by opinion, is a thousand fold worse, so far as the feel-

ings of the individual are concerned, than to be degraded by the laws. *They* would be thus degraded, and this feeling is incompatible with habits of order and industry. Half our population would at once be paupers. Let an inhabitant of New York or Philadelphia conceive of the situation of their respective States, if one half of their population consisted of free negroes. The tie which now connects them being broken, the different races would be estranged from each other, and hostility would grow up between them. Having the command of their own time and actions, they could more effectually combine insurrection and provide the means of rendering it formidable. Released from the vigilant superintendence which now restrains them, they would infallibly be led from petty to greater crimes, until all life and property would be rendered insecure. Aggression would beget retaliation, until open war—and that a war of extermination were established. From the still remaining superiority of the white race, it is probable that they would be the victors, and if they did not exterminate, they must again reduce the others to slavery—when they could be no longer fit to be either slaves or freemen. It is not only in self defence, in defence of our country and of all that is dear to us, but in defence of the slaves themselves that we refuse to emancipate them.

If we suppose them to have political privileges, and to be admitted to the elective franchise, still worse results may be expected. It is hardly necessary to add any thing to what has been said by Mr. Paulding on this subject, who has treated it fully. It is already known, that if there be a class unfavorably distinguished by any peculiarity from the rest of society, this distinction forms a tie which binds them to act in concert, and they exercise more than their due share of political power and influence—and still more, as they are of inferior character and looser moral principle. Such a class form the very material for demagogues to work with. Other parties court them and concede to them. So it would be with the free blacks in the case supposed. They would be used by unprincipled politicians, of irregular ambition, for the advancement of their schemes, until they should give them political power and importance beyond even their own intentions. They would be courted by excited parties in their contests with each other. At some time, they may perhaps attain political ascendency, and this is more probable, as we may suppose that there will have been a great emigration of whites from the country. Imagine the government of such legislators. Imagine then the sort of laws that will be passed, to confound the invidious distinction which has been so long assumed over them, and if possible to obliterate the every memory of it. These will be resisted. The blacks will be tempted to avenge themselves by oppression and proscription of the white race, for their long superiority. Thus matters will go on, until universal anarchy, or kakistocracy, the government of the worst, is fully established. I am persuaded that if the spirit of evil should devise to send abroad upon the earth all possible misery, discord, horror and atrocity, he could contrive no scheme so effectual as the emancipation of negro slaves within our country.

The most feasible scheme of emancipation, and that which I verily believe would involve the least danger and sacrifice, would be that the *entire* white population should emigrate, and abandon the country to their slaves. Here would be triumph to philanthrophy. This wide and fertile region would be again restored to ancient barbarism—to the worst of all barbarism—barbarism corrupted and depraved by intercourse with civilization. And this is the consummation to be wished, upon a *speculation*, that in some distant future age, they may become so enlightened and improved, as to be capable of sustaining a position among the civilized races of the earth. But I believe moralists allow men to defend their homes and their country, even at the expense of the lives and liberties of others.

Will any philanthropist say that the evils, of which I have spoken, would be brought about only by the obduracy, prejudices and overweaning self estimation of the whites in refusing to blend the races by marriage, and so create an homogenous population. But what if it be not prejudice, but truth, and nature, and right reason, and just moral feeling? As I have before said, throughout the whole of nature, like attracts like, and that which is unlike repels. What is it that makes so unspeakably loathsome, crimes not to be named, and hardly alluded to? Even among the nations of Europe, so nearly homogenous, there are some peculiarities of form and feature, mind and character, which may be generally distinguished by those accustomed to observe them. Though the exceptions are numerous, I will venture to say that not in one instance in a hundred, is the man of sound and unsophisticated tastes and propensities so likely to be attracted by the female of a foreign stock, as by one of his own, who is more nearly conformed to himself. Shakspeare spoke the language of nature, when he made the senate and people of Venice attribute to the effect of witchcraft, Desdemona's passion for Othello—though, as Coleridge has said, we are to conceive of him not as a negro, but as a high bred, Moorish Chief.

If the negro race, as I have contended, be inferior to our own in mind and character, marked by inferiority of form and features, then ours would suffer deterioration from such intermixture. What would be thought of the moral conduct of the parent who should voluntarily transmit disease, or fatuity, or deformity to his offspring? If man be the most perfect work of the creator, and the civilized European man the most perfect variety of the human race, is he not criminal who would desecrate and deface God's fairest work; estranging it further from the image of himself, and conforming it more nearly to that of the brute. I have heard it said, as if it afforded an argument, that the African is as well satisfied of the superiority of his own complexion, form and features, as we can be of ours. If this were true, as it is not, would any one be so recreant to his own civilization, as to say that his opinion ought to weigh against ours—that there is no universal standard of truth and grace and beauty—that the Hottentot Venus may perchance possess as great perfection of form as the Medicean? It is true, the licentious passions of men overcome the natural repug-

nance, and find transient gratification in intercourse with females of the other race. But this is a very different thing from making her the associate of life, the companion of the bosom and the hearth. Him who would contemplate such an alliance for himself, or regard it with patience, when proposed for a son or daughter or sister, we should esteem a degraded wretch—with justice, certainly, if he were found among ourselves—and the estimate would not be very different if he were found in Europe. It is not only in defence of ourselves, of our country and of our own generation, that we refuse to emancipate our slaves, but to defend our posterity and race from degeneracy and degradation.

Are we not justified then in regarding as criminals, the fanatical agitators whose efforts are intended to bring about the evils I have described. It is sometimes said that their zeal is generous and disinterested, and that their motives may be praised, though their conduct be condemned. But I have little faith in the good motives of those who pursue bad ends. It is not for us to scrutinize the hearts of men, and we can only judge of them by the tendency of their actions. There is much truth in what was said by Coleridge. "I have never known a trader in philanthropy who was not wrong in heart somehow or other. Individuals so distinguished, are usually unhappy in their family relations—men not benevolent or beneficent to individuals, but almost hostile to them, yet lavishing money and labor and time on the race—the abstract notion." The prevalent love of notoriety actuates some. There is much luxury in sentiment, especially if it can be indu ged at the expense of others, and if there be added some share of envy or malignity, the temptation to indulgence is almost irresistible. But certainly they may be justly regarded as criminal, who obstinately shut their eyes and close their ears to all instruction with respect to the true nature of their actions.

It must be manifest to every man of sane mind that it is impossible for them to achieve ultimate success; even if every individual in our country, out of the limits of the slave holding states, were united in their purposes. They cannot have even the miserable triumph of St. Domingo—of advancing through scenes of atrocity, blood and massacre, to the restoration of barbarism. They may agitate and perplex the world for a time. They may excite to desperate attempts and particular acts of cruelty and horror, but these will always be suppressed or avenged at the expense of the objects of their truculent philanthropy. But short of this, they can hardly be aware of the extent of the mischief they perpetrate. As I have said, their opinions, by means to us inscrutable, do very generally reach our slave population. What human being, if unfavorably distinguished by outward circumstances, is not ready to believe when he is told that he is the victim of injustice? Is it not cruelty to make men restless and dissatisfied in their condition, when no effort of theirs can alter it? The greatest injury is done to their characters, as well as to their happiness. Even if no such feelings or designs should be entertained or conceived by the slave, they will be attributed to him by the mas-

ter, and all his conduct scanned with a severe and jealous scrutiny. Thus distrust and aversion are established, where, but for mischievous interference, there would be confidence and good will, and a sterner control is exercised over the slave who thus becomes the victim of his cruel advocates.

An effect is sometimes produced on the minds of slave holders, by the publications of the self styled philanthropists, and their judgments staggered and consciences alarmed. It is natural that the oppressed should hate the oppressor. It is still more natural that the oppressor should hate his victim. Convince the master that he is doing injustice to his slave, and he at once begins to regard him with distrust and malignity. It is a part of the constitution of the human mind, that when circumstances of necessity or temptation induce men to continue in the practice of what they believe to be wrong, they become desperate and reckless of the degree of wrong. I have formerly heard of a master who accounted for his practising much severity upon his slaves, and exacting from them an unusual degree of labor, by saying that the thing (slavery) was altogether wrong, and therefore it was well to make the greatest possible advantage out of it. This agitation occasions some slave holders to hang more loosely on their country. Regarding the institution as of questionable character, condemned by the general opinion of the world, and one which must shortly come to an end, they hold themselves in readiness to make their escape from the evil which they anticipate. Some sell their slaves to new masters (always a misfortune to the slave) and remove themselves to other societies, of manners and habits uncongenial to their own. And though we may suppose that it is only the weak and the timid who are liable to be thus affected, still it is no less an injury and public misfortune. Society is kept in an unquiet and restless state, and every sort of improvement is retarded.

Some projectors suggest the education of slaves, with a view to prepare them for freedom—as if there were any method of a man's being educated to freedom, but by himself. The truth is however, that supposing that they are shortly to be emancipated, and that they have the capacities of any other race, they are undoing the very best education which it possible to give. They are in the course of being taught habits of regular and patient industry, and this is the first lesson which is required. I suppose, that their most zealous advocates would not desire that they should be placed in the high places of society immediately upon their emancipation, but that they should begin their course of freedom as laborers, and raise themselves afterwards as their capacities and characters might enable them. But how little would what are commonly called the rudiments of education, add to their qualifications as laborers? But for the agitation which exists however, their education would be carried further than this. There is a constant tendency in our society to extend the sphere of their employments, and consequently to give them the information which is necessary to the discharge of those employments. And this for the most obvious reason, it promotes the master's interest. How

much would it add to the value of a slave, that he should be capable of being employed as a clerk, or be able to make calculations as a mechanic? In consequence, however, of the fanatical spirit which has been excited, it has been thought necessary to repress this tendency by legislation, and to prevent their acquiring the knowledge of which they might make a dangerous use. If this spirit were put down, and we restored to the consciousness of security, this would be no longer necessary, and the process of which I have spoken would be accelerated. Whenever indications of superior capacity appeared in a slave, it would be cultivated; gradual improvement would take place, until they might be engaged in as various employments as they were among the ancients—perhaps even liberal ones. Thus, if in the adorable providence of God, at a time and in a manner which we can neither foresee nor conjecture, they are to be rendered capable of freedom and to enjoy it, they would be prepared for it in the best and most effectual, because in the most natural and gradual manner. But fanaticism hurries to its effect at once. I have heard it said, God does good, but it is by imperceptible degrees; the Devil is permitted to do evil, and he does it in a hurry. The beneficent processes of nature are not apparent to the senses. You cannot see the plant grow or the flower expand. The volcano, the earthquake and the hurricane do their work of desolation in a moment. Such would be the desolation, if the schemes of fanatics were permitted to have effect. They do all that in them lies to thwart the benificent purposes of providence. The whole tendency of their efforts is to aggravate present suffering and to cut off the chance of future improvement, and in all their bearings and results, have produced, and are likely to produce, nothing but "fierce, unmixed, dephlegmated, defeated evil."

If Wilberforce or Clarkson were living, and it were enquired of them "can you be sure that you have promoted the happiness of a single human being?" I imagine that, if they considered conscientiously, they would find it difficult to answer in the affirmative. If it were asked "can you be sure that you have not been the cause of suffering, misery and death to thousands,"—when we recollect that they probably stimulated the exertions of the *amis des noirs* in France and that through the efforts of these, the horrors of St. Domingo were perpetrated. I think they must hesitate long to return a decided negative. It might seem cruel, if we could, to convince a man who has devoted his life to what he esteemed a good and generous purpose, that he has been doing only evil—that he has been worshipping a horrid fiend, in the place of the true God. But fanaticism is in no danger of being convinced. It is one of the mysteries of our nature, and of the divine government, how utterly disproportioned to each other, are the powers of doing evil and of doing good. The poorest and most abject instrument, that is utterly imbecile for any purpose of good, seems sometimes endowed with almost the powers of omnipotence for mischief. A mole may inundate a province—a spark from a forge may conflagrate a city—a whisper may seperate friends, a rumor may convulse an empire—but when we would do benefit to our

race or country, the purest and most chastened motives, the most patient thought and labor, with the humblest self distrust, are hardly sufficient to assure us that the results may not disappoint our expectations, and that we may not do evil instead of good. But are we therefore to refrain from efforts to benefit our race and country? By no means: but these motives, this labour and self distrust are the only conditions upon which we are permitted to hope for success. Very different indeed is the course of those, whose precipitate and ignorant zeal would overturn the fundamental institutions of society, uproot its peace and endanger its security, in pursuit of a distant and shadowy good, of which they themselves have formed no definite conception—whose atrocious philosophy would sacrifice a generation—and more than one generation—for any hypothesis.

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WERT
BOOKBINDING
Crestville Pa
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Mary Diane Bond